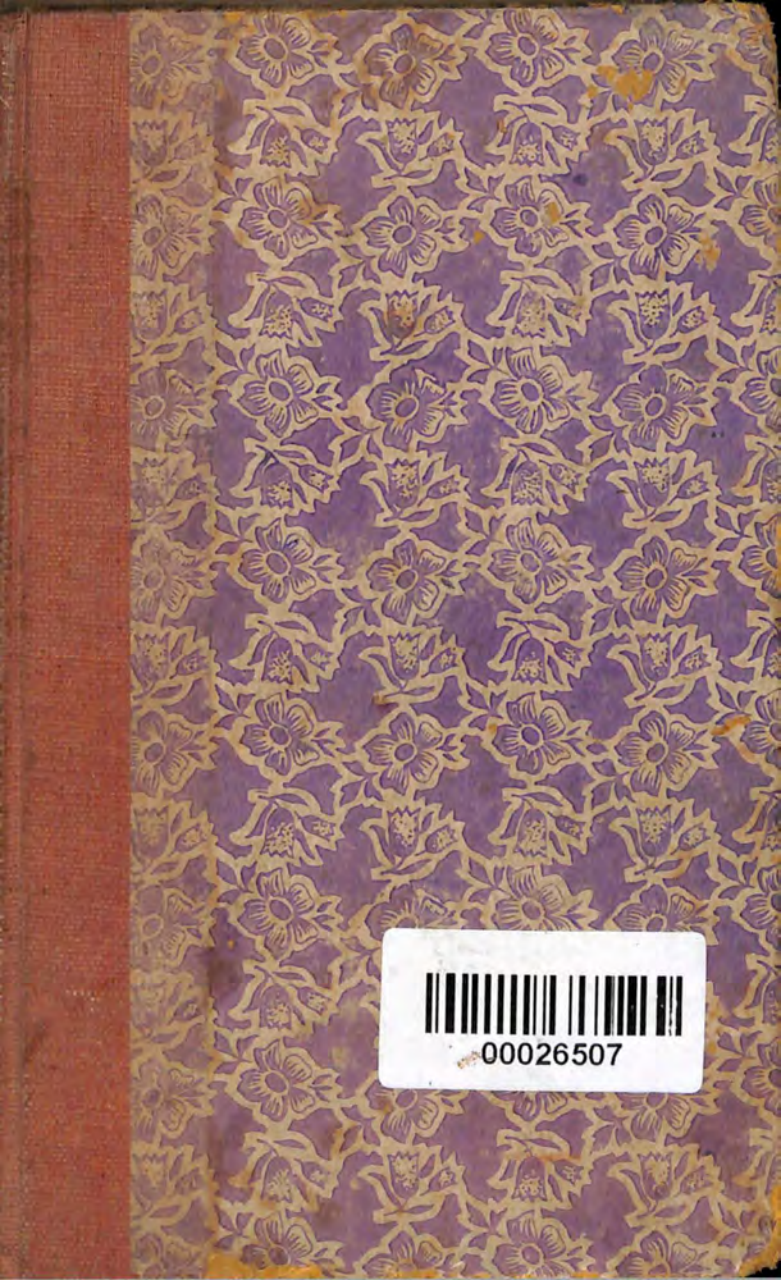
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PEACE,

WAR, AND ADVENTURE:

AN

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

26507

GEORGE LAVAL CHESTERTON,

FORMERLY OF
THE FIELD TRAIN DEPARTMENT OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY,
SUBSEQUENTLY A CAPTAIN IN THE ARMY OF COLUMBIA, AND AT
PRESENT GOVERNOR OF THE HOUSE OF CORRECTION
AT COLD BATH FIELDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PEACE, WAR, AND ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

MONS REVISITED. — PARK OF ARTILLERY FORMED THERE — REMOVAL TO ANTWERP. — ARMY OF OCCUPATION. — MARCH TO VALENCIENNES. — THE TOWN. — STRAITENED CIRCUMSTANCES. — MARCH TO OSTEND. — A VETERAN. — A PROLIFIC MOTHER. — A LADY CLERK. — REDUCED TO RATIONS. — A LOAN. — RETURN TO VALENCIENNES. — EMBARRASSING ADVENTURE.

At length autumn began to wear its yellow tint, and the Bourbon dynasty appeared to be assuming hourly consolidation. The battering train, no longer needed, was ordered to retrace its steps to Mons, and convoys innumerable dragged their slow length along the now deserted chaussée.

Arrived at Mons, a huge park was formed, of which I, under Major Carmichael, had the active superintendence. For three weeks I rose daily at 5 A.M., contriving to reach the Porte de Bruxelles, at the moment the gates were thrown open. There I was met by numerous fatigue parties proceeding

to toil with effective industry, and at length our object was fully accomplished, and a park of artillery was formed which, from its extent and novelty, attracted hosts of visitors from all the circumjacent district.

We gazed upon this wondrous display of our country's capability with something akin to pride; and I had, here, the delight to receive, before a host of officers and men, the special public thanks of Sir Alexander Dickson for my exertions to effect a work, which was now universally admitted to exhibit a specimen of England's prowess.

Heavy battering guns, mortars, howitzers, piles of shot and shells, gins, limbers, Flanders waggons, and ball cartridge carts, disposed in studied order, and surrounded by a well planted belt of *chevaux de frise*, occupied an extended area, and presented a *tout ensemble* of Woolwich in miniature.

This gigantic disposition had scarcely been perfected, ere we received directions to discompose the whole arrangement, and conduct the armament piecemeal to Antwerp for re-embarkation; but, before the last fragment of that vast array could reach Antwerp, the winter had set in, and it came on with a suddenness, and intensity which proved most severe. The Scheldt was rendered dangerous by the masses of floating ice which impeded naviga-

tion, and we were forced to bide our time, and await the good pleasure of the elements.

Meanwhile, we were quietly consigned to billets varying in accommodation, and had ample time to survey the wondrous efforts of Napoleon in the arsenal and docks of that city (now well known), to fit it for superior maritime purposes.

The fate of France had at length been discussed by the European powers, and the army of occupation determined upon. For three or five years, according to circumstances, were the various contingents of the allied belligerents to occupy her soil; and the several cantonments allotted to the troops had now been marked out. Cambrai and Valenciennes, with various contiguous villages, and a wider sweep for the cavalry, had been assigned to the British forces; and the whole expense of the occupation was to be borne by France from a given day in the early part of 1816. The Russians (Prussians for a time only), Danes, and Hanoverians, occupied selected portions of the country, and France, thus physically bound to preserve the general peace, groaned under the pay and subsistence of 100,000 men.

The snow yet covered the ground in the month of February, when I accompanied a vast convoy, guarded by heterogeneous detachments, from Antwerp to Valenciennes. A night's halt at Malines, at

Brussels, at Hal, and at Mons, may tend to show the tedious progress of such a train.

Valenciennes, a fortress heretofore frequently contested, was a town of goodly circumference. Its citadel was what the French used to designate "*un bon morceau.*" The means of inundation were copious; and its very deep fosse and solid walls (their approach enfiladed by numerous bastions) might almost defy the enterprise of the most daring assailants. The town was capacious, and the streets numerous. The "Place d'Armes" was a fine square containing the best coffee-houses, while the Hotel de Ville occupied one entire face of it. The Place Verde and the ramparts presented ample space for promenade, and the whole might be termed a desirable place of residence. The usual want of embellishment, common to French provincial towns, was here also discernible, and we took possession at a time when dirt and drizzle increased its disfigurement. In a short time, however, the fastidious neatness of Englishmen begat extensive cleanliness, with some faint attempt at embellishment. Thus, the streets were regularly swept, the ramparts were mowed, trimmed, and variously improved: the brick houses were pointed and their sashes painted, and Valenciennes shone forth with renovated lustre. It really wore the appearance of a neat and lively town.

When the British first occupied Valenciennes, and other not very distant posts, the arrangements with the French government had not been completed, and pay, consequently, at the fixed period, was not forthcoming. Many not over provident individuals found their periodical demands unanswered, and something analogous to distress became their portion. I can testify that, so unprepared was I for a casualty of this description, that I hardly knew where to turn for the most ordinary supply.

At such a moment, and before I had time to seek a settled quarter, I was ordered to accompany a convoy to Ostend, and to return with munitions indispensable to the army. It was useless to plead want of means, for the daily rations were expressly designed to supply our wants. However, I had the good fortune to be able to borrow ten francs, and with this frail pecuniary resource set off, in the month of February, for the distant port of Ostend. I was accompanied by a junior of the field train department, whose purse was even more slender than my own, and passing the neat fortified town of Condé, we were progressing towards Leuze, on the Belgian frontier, when I overtook an officer of the Veteran Battalion, named Williams, whose detachment we had already passed upon the road.

He was one of those rude, good-tempered sons of

Mars, who had been elevated from the ranks, and, when I overtook him, he was making rapid strides to reach the frontier of Belgium, in order to avoid a parley with French gendarmes. His speed was accelerated by the aid of a stick which might claim affinity with a shillaleh, and, brandishing it with characteristic excitement, Williams informed me it was named "sweet lips," and had, the preceding evening, inflicted desperate damage upon the heads of some Frenchmen, in an *émeute* at a *café* in Valenciennes. Threatened with civic punishment, he had eagerly availed himself of his route to Ostend, and marshalling his small detachment, he issued from that garrison at the earliest allowable moment, with a view to secure his personal safety.

We crossed the frontier—Williams was safe from any suspected pursuers; and, when his followers were enabled to rejoin him, they all found an asylum in my waggons, and journeyed to Ostend with an ease which their outset had not promised.

I found this man to be a source of never-failing amusement. He told such strange stories of his early career, and was altogether so singular a specimen of a "commissioned" officer, that I have ever since, involuntarily, reverted to his deportment, appearance, and conversation, whenever the subject of raising men from the ranks, to be officers, has occu-

pied a passing discussion. I last saw him at Ostend. He was proceeding to embark, and was carrying on his shoulders a load of moveable furniture, followed by his wife and daughter. He dropped his load to shake hands with me, and suddenly turning round roughly, introduced me to "the womankind."

We reached Ghent, and there Williams introduced me to a merchant named Smith, who invited us to dinner, and liberally regaled us. I should not have cited this casual entertainment, but for the intelligence which we received from Mrs. Smith, that she had been the mother of *thirty-two* children. In recording this assertion I had no other reliance upon the fact than her own avowal, uttered unreservedly in the presence of her husband. I know not why she should have forged a gratuitous lie, and especially upon such a subject. She was a woman of diminutive stature, and had only one eye, but she appeared to be active and robust, and seemed still to be, to all outward appearance, a happy woman.

According to the customary practice, I procured a billet, and was assigned to the care of Monsieur Battaille, then the principal banker of Ghent. My apartment was all that I could wish for, and, moreover, the banker and his lady extended to me every desirable courtesy. She was the mother of a family, and her eldest daughter, about eighteen years of age,

was a girl of elegant exterior, who was, equally with her younger sisters, still under the tuition of a governess. All the arrangements of the family betokened elegance, and they kept a handsome carriage.

Notwithstanding all the external indications of superior condition, Madame Battaille (who was of very slender form) was a daily operative in the counting house, arrayed in the most untidy dishabille, and with her hair in curl papers. With a pen stuck from time to time behind her ear, she would cash cheques, count out five-franc pieces, seize books and rapidly make entries therein, and act the part of an active clerk and cashier. When I casually entered the banking office, I was perfectly astonished to behold the lady, whom I had seen so elegantly doing the honours of her table, in such an unseemly attire, and in the active pursuit of duties so foreign to British ideas of dignity, and even ordinary feminine propriety. Such, however, was the fact, and it presented a strange contrast in the habits of contiguous nations. It is affirmed by some, that the conscription, which despoiled the country of so large a portion of its male population, necessitated the employment of females in offices foreign to their natural habits; and, by degrees, the practice became one of prevalent adoption.

Quitting Ghent, and taking the most direct road

to Ostend, we halted at Eekloo, and there my very small stock of money having been expended, we were compelled to ask the good lady of our billet to cook for us the small supply of meat doled out to us as rations. In vain I endeavoured to explain to her the exigency of unperfected treaties. She could not comprehend the grounds of our necessity, and sighed over the poverty of the British nation.

Leaving behind us at Eekloo a character for either poverty or parsimony, we journeyed to Ostend, and electrified that unostentatious town by the novel appearance of our convoy, consisting of a train of waggons, guarded by a competent escort, extending at least a mile and a half in length. Here we found a small staff, maintained by the Duke of Wellington, simply for a supposable last resource. It, too, formed an item in the cost to France of the army of occupation, and, consequently, the defective cash arrangements at head-quarters were equally felt at Ostend. Our hope therefore of pecuniary succour vanished with our arrival.

Happily, I here met with one of the contractors for the supply of horses, whom I had known with the battering train, and confiding to him our destitute condition, he liberally drew his purse-strings, and advanced me as a loan the munificent sum of five Napoleons. This rich mine of wealth appeared to

me to be inexhaustible. I husbanded it with care, and it proved sufficient to keep me in funds until I rejoined the army at Valenciennes, where I found the military chest full, and the credit of the paymaster redeemed.

The same gigantic convoy retraced the route to Valenciennes without any very remarkable adventure. At Ghent, however, I was accosted by a man having the appearance of a Flemish bourgeois, who importuned me to allow him to deposit a quantity of tobacco in the waggons, for transit to Valenciennes. I was then quite ignorant of the large protective duty upon that article, on its admission into France from Belgium, and refused compliance with the request, without a moment's reflection upon the object in view.

I lost sight of the man, and journeyed, unsuspiciously, until I arrived at Condé, where the French douaniers insisted upon searching the convoy generally. I resisted the demand simply to save time, and at their instance affirmed, upon my honour, that there was nothing contraband in the waggons under my charge; and I spoke most conscientiously when I so averred. Some days after my arrival at Valenciennes, and when I had delivered over, and almost forgotten, my late charge, I was one evening called out from the Café de la Paix to speak to an individual,

whose varied inquiries had pursued me there, and to my surprise I found at the door the identical individual who had accosted me at Ghent. "Ou est mon tabac, Monsieur?" was the angry question, the moment I made my appearance. It was in vain that I denied any knowledge of the subject, for increased excitement and threats followed every syllable I uttered. At length I lost all patience, and wrathfully consigned the fellow "au diable," and he left me vowing to carry his complaint to the general.

On reflection, I felt extremely uncomfortable at the threatened appeal, for although I was really ignorant of the trick played off upon this contrabandiste, there was much suspicion attaching to the transaction, and I should have found it difficult to clear myself from participation in the fraud. It subsequently became manifest to me, that on my refusal at Ghent the fellow had sought the good offices of one of the escort, who had permitted him to deposit his tobacco in a waggon, and on our arrival at Valenciennes the precious consignment miraculously disappeared.

Whether one or many had been engaged in the fraud I could not possibly learn; but when I sought out the corporal and men of the escort (who belonged to Captain Maitland's company), and for my own

sake endeavoured to unravel the mystery, there was, with every consecutive denial, so much waggery playing in the countenances of each abjuror, that it was clear to me that the whole party knew, and relished, the rascally joke. The contrabandiste did not carry into execution his threat of appeal to the general (doubtless for reasons which he had well digested), and in time my mind became relieved from apprehensions which had not a little disturbed its tranquillity.

CHAP. II.

MODE OF LIFE. — PRIVATE THEATRICALS. — THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S RECEPTION. — REMOVAL TO OSTEND. — SIR GEORGE H. WOOD. — A DUTCH COMMANDANT'S ETIQUETTE. — A PROPHECY, AND A SCENE CONSEQUENT UPON IT. — AGAIN AT VALENCIENNES. — A BILLET. — A SPINSTER'S RECEPTION OF A "HERETIC." — THE RETORT, AND UPSHOT. — RETURN TO ENGLAND. — REDUCTION, AND RETIREMENT. — A FRESH FIELD OF EXERTION. — ITS HOPES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS. — AN AGED LADY'S INTEREST WITH AN OCTOGENARIAN PATRON. — OTHER PROSPECTS. — THEIR SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE. — A CASUAL MEETING. — ITS STRANGE INFLUENCE. — VISIONS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

I CONTINUED with the army of occupation for some months, and as all was tranquillity and listlessness, the daily routine was confined to idleness, or to such pastime as best suited the taste of each individual. The guards were regularly mounted, inspections and occasional reviews occurred, but rarely any beyond the common-place transactions of a garrison disturbed this portion of the army. Subscription garrison balls, held at the salon in the Place Verde, private theatricals, and visits to contiguous towns constituted our amusements.

Much excitement and mischief were produced, by the arrival from Paris of a company of gamesters, with their roulette table, and rouge et noir, who

established themselves in spacious rooms in the Place d'Armes, where they extensively fleeced the whole garrison. The Duke of Wellington applied for, and in due time received, authority to expel them, and summarily expelled they were, but not until the exhaustion of their dupes had left them little more to glean in Valenciennes. The after consequences of this *égarement* on the part of the British evolved the ruin of numerous individuals. For my own part, after a loss larger than suited to my convenience, I bound myself by a solemn vow to refrain, and under this safeguard I sometimes contemplated losses, and a consequent display of anguish, that made me curse that most insidious, but ruinous passion.

The Duke of Wellington, on one or two occasions, honoured the theatre with his presence, and never failed to experience the most enthusiastic reception. The whole of the British part of the audience would rise, and cheer their favourite hero with prolonged shouts of exultation. Upon such occasions, but few of the French inhabitants were present, but the utmost excitement would prevail without the building, and crowds of people would struggle to catch a glimpse of the renowned chief.

Upwards of two miles from the town, a large tract of land had been rented, and converted into a noble race-course. Plates were raised by subscription, horses

were handicapped, matches made, and cards of the races printed. Two horses, well known at Newmarket, "Offa's Dyke," and "Charles de Moor," belonging respectively to Sir Charles Smith, R. E., and to Colonel Churchill of the Guards, contended, to the delight of the British, and the amazement of the French. Racing was then only known by name in France, but the multitudes that thronged to witness the diversion attested the interest with which even the French regarded the sport.

In the course of the summer of 1816 I was ordered to Ostend, and there I remained stationary, and inert, for eight months. During that time, we were visited by Sir George Adam Wood, who, as Colonel commanding the Royal Artillery, with the army of occupation, came to inspect the British establishment at that port. He was accompanied by Mr. Commissary Edwards, and courteously invited us all (by the way only three in number) to a dinner at the Hotel Imperial. He had called upon the Dutch commandant of the garrison, who happened to be a Colonel Macdonald, a Scotchman, formerly in the British service, and invited him to dinner also. Either the penury or meanness of that officer created no little sensation at the dinner table.

The well-known continental custom of considering even the lump of sugar, not consumed with a single

cup of coffee, as private property, and transferring it to the pocket, was extended, on this occasion, by Colonel Macdonald, to some peaches remaining untouched in the dessert dish. When the waiter came in to remove the dessert, the canny Colonel inquired complacently, who would take more peaches, and no one replying in the affirmative, he vulgarly transferred the whole to his pocket, saying he would take them home for an invalid. The surprise of Sir George Wood, and the wild gaze of every guest, testified the universal disgust at this ill-bred application of a niggardly local rule, ill suited to polished English society.

Pending our stay at Ostend, a Roman Catholic priest of Ghent had predicted the end of the world on a given day; and the period for the fulfilment or fallacy of the prophecy speedily arrived. The superstitiously devout regarded this event as certain, and one family in particular, who occupied a house looking up the market-place towards the principal church, had timidly closed the shutters, and awaited with prayerful consternation the dreaded catastrophe. It so happened that, on that very day, a groom had landed some spirited horses belonging to a nobleman in Germany, and had no sooner mounted one of them on the quay, than the animal taking fright rushed with blind speed past the church, through the market-place, and dashed his head with demolishing effect

against the closed shutter of these confiding devotees. The shrieks and sobs that followed the concussion caused the door to be forced open, and the public rushed in to behold the prostration and terror of the inmates, all of whom believed the day of judgment to be indeed at hand. They were at length relieved from their alarm, but the good people of Ostend laughed long and heartily at so singular an event on such a day.

In process of time I was ordered back from Ostend to Valenciennes, after having made various excursions to and fro, to procure what was termed "the subsistence" of the depôt in Belgium. On those occasions I realised the terrors of the smuggler, simply in my zeal to serve friends in France. Many were the pieces of bandannahs (upon which the octroi was excessive) that I concealed and carried over the frontier. Certainly the French douaniers of that day were very easily deceived.

Such was the changeless monotony of the garrison that I only know, during my last stay at Valenciennes, of one single fact worth recording. I occupied a billet at the house of one Mademoiselle Glaire, an aged spinster, whose demure exterior was an antidote to the most casual politeness. It was in vain for one to tender her, when she chanced to open the door,

the passing compliments of a stranger. She would purse up her mouth, bow stiffly, and receive my civilities with such cold disdain, that at length I ceased to trouble her with any sign of recognition.

Immediately opposite to my quarter was a vender of gloves, and chance took me one day into that shop for the purchase of a pair. A smart-looking *fille de boutique* asked me if I were not the "Monsieur" who lodged *chez* Mademoiselle Glaire. I answered in the affirmative, and the following colloquy ensued, of course in French. "Does she ever speak to you?" "No," was my prompt reply, "and I have often been surprised at her utter disregard of the commonest courtesy." "Do you know why?" asked my inquirer. "No," I replied. "I have always paid her polite attention, only to meet with contempt in return." The young woman laughed outright, and proceeded to inform me that Mademoiselle was too rigid a Catholic to exchange words with a heretic.

Just at that juncture a general complaint had been made to the Duke of Wellington of the late hours kept by British officers, and of the consequent disturbance to private families burthened with billets. Instead however of the desired redress, there appeared in the general orders of the army a protest on the part of his Grace against this interference with the independent action of the officers, and a notification

that he deemed each officer's quarter accessible to him at all hours. Mademoiselle Glaire, ignorant of this exposition of our privileges, one night, or rather early morning, had sat up to let me in with a face surcharged with vinegar, and, dropping the curtesy most studiedly insulting, she begged of me to keep better hours or to exchange my billet. I was so incensed at this climax to her insolence, that I told her in a loud tone that my billet was my castle, and that she had better trouble her head with her own affairs, and not with my convenience. I never saw a person so astounded. My fierce look and vociferous denunciation seemed to frighten the demure old maid, and she hurriedly retired to cogitate, and to resolve upon the next day's step, only to learn that she was powerless on the point which she had resolved to contest. Thenceforth she was more civil, and I less complaisant.

The story of Mademoiselle Glaire, and her horror of heretics, got wind, and when I left Valenciennes, as I did in June 1817, I was importuned by Lieutenant Sherborne of the 1st Royals (a wild, rattling fellow, who observed religiously the small hours) to give him the earliest notice of my prospective departure, that he might secure the billet for himself. I did so, and he obtained it. In quitting Valenciennes,

my conviction was strong that Mademoiselle Glaire would soon have cause deeply to deplore my loss.

A somewhat sudden resolution of the Board of Ordnance effected a considerable reduction of the field train department, and the rule of seniority prevailing, I and other juniors were despatched to England. I journeyed through Lisle and Cassel to Calais, and thence to Dover, and duly appearing at Woolwich received my *congé* upon a scanty modicum of half pay. I had now apparently to begin life again, and looked around on all hands for an eligible pursuit. I need not dwell upon the numerous expedients, and their successive failures, until at length I formed the acquaintance of a wealthy old lady residing in Cadogan Place, who died some few years afterwards, at an age, described in the obituary, of 102 years.

She was so eccentric, yet kind, that while I wondered at the one quality, I relied upon the other. She had lost some thousands by the chicanery of a clergyman, who had perpetrated an enormous fraud upon the public, and upon this aged lady in particular, by means of an institution called the "Philanthropic Annuity Company," and she was immersed in law to recover what she could of the amount. I dined with her often, accompanied her in her carriage to the chambers of legal advisers, and exercised a thousand good

offices for her benefit. At length she determined that I should obtain some appointment under the East India Company (she was a proprietress of that stock), and assured me that her kind friend Mr. Elphinstone, at that time a director, would willingly at her instance promote my interest. Duly furnished with a letter, expressing her desire to enlist his services in my behalf, I waited upon the Director, an octogenarian, tall, bland, and of polished deportment. He received me with the most courteous suavity, read the letter, looked grave for a moment, and rising from his seat with a smile, proceeded towards the door, which he opened with one hand, while he extended the other to me. In a very few words he made me understand there was no hope for me in the service of the East India Directors, and in the sweetest imaginable accents, wishing me "all possible success in life," consigned me to the hall.

When in the street, I was so impressed with the courtly comicality of the whole scene, that my mind was too much amused to suffer despondency, and I returned to Cadogan Place to report the issue, without a particle of disappointment to obscure my countenance.

Through the same medium I became introduced to a gentleman who had exposed the "Philanthropic" bubble, and who was then striving to found a so-

ciety for insurance generally, and for the grant of annuities specifically. After a few interviews, in which terms were discussed, I was admitted to act as the future secretary. I had undertaken an active part in the procurement of recommendations tending to effect the object, and, through my early patroness Viscountess Perceval (who at that time resided in a handsome villa on the confines of Blackheath), I did obtain many introductions. These, however, required to be sifted, furnished with every requisite information, and to be largely treated with. Some were valuable and promising, others proved of no avail; but somehow or other, a host of eligible supporters arose out of the original source, until at length the society was established. In order, however, to suit the interest enlisted into it, I was expelled from the promised post of secretary, to make room for the nominee of a wealthy coadjutor.

As I had been actually present at the agreement for the premises in Chatham Place, and had even sought out, and instructed the cabinet-maker who prepared and fixed the office furniture, I was indignant at my rejection, and had on that subject an acrimonious dispute with the projector. So soon, however, as the angry colloquy had somewhat subsided, and a lull had enabled him to explain all the difficulty of his position, I became so impressed with

his reasonableness and good faith, controlled as they were by necessity, that I extended to him my hand, and from that day to the present moment have numbered that gentleman amongst my most attached friends.

Still, after months of toil and anxiety I had been discarded, and was again doomed to seek amidst sordid interests a resting-place for my hopes of honourable advancement. The office in question has for years been firmly established, and now ranks as one of the many flourishing institutions in this vast metropolis.

My mind became greatly overcast by repeated hopes and disappointments; and although I had no want to apprehend, possessing kind relatives whose ceaseless good offices sustained me, still a sort of torpid indifference congealed my faculties, and I began to think of retiring into Wales, or to the Highlands, there to consign myself to a life of rural simplicity. While indulging in this mood, and straying casually down the Strand just near to Northumberland House, I unexpectedly met with a military friend whom I had known in Spain, and as he grasped my hand *en passant* he playfully exclaimed, "Now, my boy, for South America, flags, banners, glory, and riches," and thus saying he speedily moved on.

"South America!" I ejaculated, and strange ima-

ginations seemed instantly to invade my senses. A notion flashed across my mind that it would be interesting to explore that country, and magnanimous to aid in the struggle for its emancipation. This casual rencontre laid the foundation for an event in my life, which I shall next proceed to develop.

CHAP. III.

AN ARMY CLOTHIER'S INFORMATION. — INTERVIEW WITH COLONEL ENGLISH. — A RESOLUTION TO AID THE EMANCIPATORS. — ITS ENCOURAGEMENT. — RECOMMENDATION. — ENROLMENT, AND DEPARTURE. — AN EMBARRASSING DISCOVERY. — VULGAR COMPANY. — ARRIVAL AT LYMINGTON.

No sooner had I lost sight of my quondam acquaintance than I walked on, brooding reflectively over the subject he had so suddenly awakened in my mind. I, equally with the country at large, had long been familiar with the history of that sanguinary contest. The names of the contending chiefs, and the alternate successes and reverses of either party, had widely circulated through the public press. The condition of the cause at that moment was promising. Bolivar, the acknowledged leader of the movement, who had been a fugitive to Jamaica, where he narrowly escaped assassination, was now marshalling his forces on the plains of the Apure, and had already shaken the confidence of the Royalist commanders. The patriot forces had compelled Morillo to evacuate the island of Margarita. The navigation of the Orinoco was exclusively in the hands of the insurgents; while at Angostura, 250 miles from the mouth of that

stream, a congress was assembled, and a settled government rudely sketched out.

I had long wished success to the popular cause without ever dreaming of participation in it; while the travels of Humboldt had awakened so much interest within me, that to explore such interesting regions was a bait of no ordinary attraction.

I went musingly on, and casting my eyes upon the walls, read for the first time, attentively, numerous large placards posted to invite men to enlist in a cause which was, as usual, boastfully lauded in the accustomed broad type. Numerous references for "further particulars" were cited, and amongst others "to Solomon and Co., army clothiers, at Charing Cross." As I was close upon the spot, I hastily concluded there could be no harm in making a little inquiry there; and consequently, within a quarter of an hour of my friend's singular salutation, I was standing near to Solomon's shop, and scrutinising its external appearance.

A window of ample dimensions was furnished with the usual display common to such trades; and a goodly assortment of swords, sashes, epaulettes, cocked hats, military caps and feathers, denoted a respectable business. Thus primarily encouraged I stepped in, and found Mr. Solomon himself at the counter, who answered my questions promptly, and

proceeded to inform me that nearly 1200 men had been enlisted, and that the principal part had already sailed. Colonel English, the commander of the expedition, was said in three days' time to be about to leave town to join the last portion of the expedition, then embarked and awaiting his arrival off Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight.

Solomon, moreover, informed me, that under a commission from General Bolivar, the supreme chief of Venezuela, Colonel English had contracted with Mr. Herring (of the firm of Herring and Richardson), to supply the arms, accoutrements, and clothing; to furnish the requisite vessels, and to victual them. He gave me the address of the Colonel in Norfolk Street, Strand, adding, "If you desire to go, you have no time to lose!" He further promised (since he had made the uniforms of all the officers), should my services be accepted, to complete my outfit with the required expedition.

From Charing Cross I hurried to Norfolk Street, where I found the Colonel at home, and was instantly ushered into his presence, to explain the object of my visit.

Colonel English was a man of medium stature, with a swarthy complexion, black hair, whiskers, and mustachios, and was a person who could assume either a most forbidding, or inviting demeanour. In

this instance, his reception of me was cold and repulsive, and he tartly informed me, that as he was taking out many retired British officers, and other gentlemen of good families, he must decline to treat with me until my respectability should be established to his satisfaction. That announcement pleased me exceedingly, since it bore the stamp of honourable caution.

I quickly replied, that I would satisfy him by the testimony of a nobleman, and others of station in society, that I was not unworthy to be enrolled in "The British Legion," for such was the designation of the auxiliary force. The rigidity of his features thereupon relaxed in some degree, and he proceeded to dilate upon the prospective advantages of the service, and the beauty and fertility of the land of promise. Finally he appointed 10 o'clock of the following morning to receive me, and peruse my credentials; and, taking leave of Colonel English, I repaired with all despatch to Blackheath, and confided my design to Lady Perceval.

That dear woman, equally with the public at large, sympathised with a people who had struggled so long and fiercely for emancipation, and instead of shrinking at the prospective danger of the scheme, she instantly applauded my "spirit," and encouraged me to adopt it. Lord Perceval also, to whom she communicated

my errand, echoed her approval, and forthwith a letter was written to Colonel English, speaking in flattering terms of me, and soliciting his best attentions to a "young friend in whose welfare Lord and Lady Perceval took a deep interest." This letter, duly sealed with the coronet, I deemed a sufficient recommendation, and returned to town, and to my room, with a mind agitated by a thousand emotions, to which, when I arose that morning, it had been a stranger.

The next forenoon saw me again closeted with Colonel English; and the perusal of Lord Perceval's letter secured me a most courteous reception. The Colonel entered more fully into details, and referred me (should I require a further guaranty) to Don Louis Lopez Mendez, the agent to the republic of Venezuela in London, who was authorised by that Government to assure to the auxiliary force one-third more than British pay, with a grant of land at the termination of the contest, more or less extended according to rank, or in lieu thereof, at the option of any officer, a graduated sum in specie. Meanwhile, I received the commission of Lieutenant, with a promise that, on our arrival in South America, I should succeed to the first vacant company. I was forthwith required to subscribe 10*l.* for the band and colours; a sum which, I was informed by the Colonel, each of eighty officers had already contributed. The

money was unhesitatingly paid, and I received a note to Mr. Solomon, requiring him to make my uniform without a moment's delay. I also was furnished with an authority to the officer commanding the detachment on board "the Francis and Eliza," lying in Yarmouth Roads, to receive me on board, and I was instructed to proceed to Lymington within three days from the period of which I am speaking.

I was supplied by a relative with ample funds, which, in sooth, I greatly needed, for the uniform was rich and costly, and all the accoutrements were of an expensive character. Indeed, when we subsequently had acquired practical acquaintance with the country, and had tested the rough service which fell to our lot, it became a subject of bitter complaint on our parts, that we had been seduced into so large and unnecessary an outlay. However, I left London with a superb outfit, and likewise carried with me a goodly sum for future contingencies.

I procured the requisite leave from the Board of Ordnance to go abroad for an unlimited period, nor in my conversation with the Secretary, the late Mr. Crew (with whom I had a personal interview), did I seek to disguise my destination. The Foreign Enlistment Bill had not yet been conceived, nor did the government of that day appear at all desirous to impede the armaments then so largely equipped in

British ports, and by the aid of British capital and sinew. At a subsequent period, the earnest protest of Spain caused a prohibitory enactment; but so tardy had the Spaniards been in their expostulation, that at least 4000 men had, at different times, been despatched to the aid of the patriots, and arms and munitions to an immense amount had also been consigned to them.

In the month of December, 1818, I started from the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill for Lymington, Hampshire. As was my constant custom, whether in winter or summer, I travelled outside the coach. The evening was seasonably dismal, and was moreover lowering and threatening; and as I stood ready to mount the roof, I was suddenly accosted by my friend Lieutenant Brumby, with whom I had long shared a quarter at Carthagena. He had casually heard of my destination, and of my intended departure from London on that very day, and had visited every inn from which stage-coaches started, under the hope of intercepting me. He had just reached the Saracen's Head, as the horses were buckled to the carriage. He besought me, in the most earnest terms, to relinquish my design, and hastily quoted many authorities to convince me I had been deceived, and that loss and disappointment would crown the enterprise. After the touching adieus of friends and

relatives, the vast expense I had incurred, and the stern resolution to go, which every succeeding step had more strongly fortified, it was not likely that I should suddenly relent under the passing prognostications of an anxious friend. I therefore tendered my affectionate thanks for his solicitude, but told him the die was cast, and that I must now abide the issue. Still the dissuasive statement of Brumby had tended to damp my spirits, and the dejection which oppressed my mind was still further increased by the ensuing untoward incident.

I sat in front, behind the box, and immediately on my right sat a tall man of respectable exterior, who maintained a conversation with a little squab woman who spoke the vilest imaginable English. He proved to be a retired serjeant of the Guards, and the little woman by his side was his wife.

Ere we reached Hyde Park Corner, rain began to descend smartly; but I was enveloped in a cloak that defied wet weather, which, however, furnished my neighbour with a topic for conversation.

"It's a wet evening, sir," said he, and then good-naturedly offered me a leathern flask, and invited me to take a dram. I thanked him, but replied that I never drank spirits. "Don't you, sir?" he answered; "I take some gallons in the course of the year;" and, with this introduction, the woman pro-

ceeded to inquire if I was going to Lymington? An answer in the affirmative induced a further question. "Be you going to join Colonel English's legion?" No sooner had I answered "Yes," than she exultingly exclaimed, "Indeed, how very strange—why, my son is an officer of English's legion!"

To use a vulgar expression, I was "struck all of a heap" at this astounding intelligence, and a cold shiver pervaded my frame. The vulgar woman continued in a strain of excited laudation of her son, and described his countless qualities with all the fondness of a mother's love. I asked his age, and learned that it numbered seventeen years. I was compelled to listen to all her wild encomiums, and the recital aroused the utmost disgust and consternation in my mind; and ultimately I sank, under the infliction, into a state of painful despondency.

I inwardly cursed my own credulity, and began seriously to reflect upon the next redeeming step to be taken. I resolved, even at the eleventh hour, to act with circumspection, and, if necessary, with decision; but go in such company I swore to myself I would not, "*coute qui coute.*"

The rain now fell in torrents, and continned so to fall throughout a night which I consumed in repentance.

Arrived at Southampton, there was no abatement

in the rough weather; but here we changed coaches, and from Southampton to Lymington we journeyed through a deluge, rendered more comfortless by a furious gale of wind. My external condition was most undesirable, but my internal reflections were almost insupportable.

I had, however, resolved, meanwhile, to act with the utmost caution: to see, to judge, and to determine; but to go out with a scrubby set of low fellows palmed upon me by fictitious description, I inwardly vowed not to do. My own natural pride would forbid any communication, upon so humiliating a subject, to my relations; and the plan which I secretly conceived was to quit the expedition, should my worst fears be confirmed, and to betake myself to some rural spot, where my own means would allow me to vegetate, and subsist.

At Lymington we alighted, still amidst stormy weather, at an inn, where a stage-coach dinner was provided, and there the son of my coarse companions awaited them. He was what is quaintly termed an "unlicked cub;" and during the dinner was so noisy and offensive, that even the waiting-maid looked significantly at me, and shrugged her shoulders, thus silently to testify her disgust.

CHAP. IV.

THE VESSEL. — RECEPTION AND IMPRESSIONS. — A LULL. — VISITORS. — A POET AND A COMPOSER. — SAILING. — A STORM. — PUT BACK. — FINAL DEPARTURE. — TYPHUS FEVER. — DEATHS. — LAND SEEN. — GULF OF PARIA. — THE DRAGON'S MOUTH. — ANCHOR. — HASTY DEPARTURE. — CAUSE. — CLEARING FOR ACTION. — DEMUR. — REACH MARGARITA.

So soon as my baggage could be passed through the Custom House, I hired a boat, and directed my course to the "Francis and Eliza." As I approached her in the Solent Sea, she had the appearance of a sloop of war, was mounted with twenty guns, and floated with becoming ocean dignity. Her deck was crowded with soldiers in white fatigue jackets, and a sentry, duly posted at the gangway, challenged the boat as it approached. I inquired for the commanding officer, Captain Low, and was informed that he was at dinner; but my authority from Colonel English to be received on board as an officer of the Legion was sent down to him, and forthwith he appeared on deck. He was a retired British officer, and had been adjutant in Sir Dennis Pack's regiment. He was tall, and of soldier-like appearance, wore a moustache, and addressed me in

terms of gentlemanlike suavity, tending to compose my troubled spirit. Appearances were auspicious, and I began to breathe more freely.

My baggage hoisted on board, I was invited by Captain Low to descend, and join my brother officers at dinner. I was ushered into a spacious cabin, and beheld a long table bountifully supplied with dishes, and around it sat some eighteen gentlemen, who rose when my presence was descriptively announced; and the very first glance dissipated all my recent apprehensions, for nothing could be more consoling than their appearance and demeanour. No one, even distantly, resembled little "Moore" (for so the uncouth boy was named); and I sat down joyfully, helped to circulate the wine, which was abundantly supplied, and enjoyed a most exhilarating evening.

I experienced a transition from despondency to satisfaction, only wondering, perforce, at the presence of such a boy as Moore. He, by the way, duly reappeared on board, and in the absence of his ignorant parents was timid and retiring. On inquiry I learned that his father had been most zealous and efficient in the work of enlistment; for which purpose he had been employed and paid. His exertions, however, had so far outstripped all anticipation, that Colonel English, as a mark of grateful recog-

nition, had volunteered to enrol his son as an officer, and take him to South America under his own especial patronage. The explanation naturally tended to abate my surprise; but the fright he had occasioned me could never be effaced from my memory.

I shall not attempt to describe the qualifications, and previous career, of many of the officers who left England on this adventurous service. Suffice it to say, that many had served in the British army, and two only, as far as we could learn, had left behind them tainted characters. There existed at that time a wild enthusiasm in favour of the cause; and to such a degree, that an accomplished gentleman, named Stopford (connected with the noble family of that name), sold out of the Life Guards in order to accompany our force; and a Mr. Brand spent 1200*l.* for the purpose of enlisting men for the British Legion, in consideration for which service he received a Captain's commission. Both sailed in the "Francis and Eliza," and were consequently my sea companions. The men were principally disbanded soldiers, who at that period swarmed in quest of employment, although other young men of suitable stature had not been rejected.

Another vessel, the "Duncombe," belonging to the same owners, was anchored near us equally filled

with troops, and we only now waited for the arrival of Colonel English, and a fair wind, to sail.

The Colonel duly appeared, accompanied by his wife, a very pretty and interesting woman, and Mr. Herring, the owner of the ship, with his wife; and a friend of his also came down to bid us adieu. A westerly gale however prevailed which forbade our departure; and as the vessel was roomy and commodious, Mr. and Mrs. Herring and their friend were furnished with befitting cabins; and as the contrary wind unchangingly blew, they staid with us a week, almost daily visiting the shore either on one or the other coast. Our band, really a good one, played choice pieces after dinner, and we spent a most agreeable week in the company of our visitors.

During this interval I acquired an unlooked-for notoriety. The motto of our corps was "morir o vencer" ("to conquer or die"); and inspired by that sentiment, I one day seized a pencil, and without premeditation composed some half-dozen stanzas, addressed to the British Legion. My poetry went from hand to hand until it reached Colonel English and his friends, who were pleased to express a high approval of it, and the same day at dinner it was unanimously honoured with the title of the "Legion Anthem," and was forwarded to London, and promptly inserted in the Morning Chronicle.

The words suited the air of "Ye gentlemen of England," which the band daily played to them, while the company joined in chorus. It was subsequently adopted by the men, and was sung by them incessantly, and under every variety of circumstance. I might almost be excused if I should give it *in extenso;* however, as I do not look upon it now with the favour which it then conciliated, I shall content myself with transcribing one single stanza, which ran as follows: —

"Behold with pride yon hallow'd Isle
Where freedom's root has thriven,
Your march is sanction'd by her smile,
And cheer'd by that of Heaven.
To plant the tree
Of Liberty
Is ever hail'd on high:
Then falter none,
But sally on
To conquer or to die."

When we were afterwards at sea, a humorous incident arose out of this Legion Anthem. The master of the band, whose name was *Reston*, professed to set my words to an original air, and produced one as his *own* composition. It was, however, recognised as the production of the master of a cavalry band when stationed at Weymouth, where the air had been popular. Mr. Reston copied his pirated notes into the regimental music book, com-

placently inserting, "the words by Signor Chestertoni, and set to music by Signor Restini." When the plagiarism was exposed I need not say how fully his impertinent egotism was ridiculed, and the affectation of Italianised names derided.

We passed the Needles and stood out to sea, but the wind speedily settled into its old quarter, and a hurricane ensued which strewed the English coast with wrecks. For three whole days we struggled in vain to make head against it, and at length our Captain determined to rush through the Needles, where the sea was furiously frothing, and taking the helm he steered the ship cleverly through the foam, and we regained our former anchorage. There we consumed three weeks in the daily expectation of a favourable change.

At length the wind veered and blew stiffly from the east, and setting all sail, in eleven days we were in the latitude of Madeira. No sooner, however, had we experienced the sun's increasing influence than typhus fever made its appearance amongst our men; and on board the "Francis and Eliza," and her sea companion the "Duncombe," suffering and distress and many deaths ensued,—the result of men flung upon the world to encounter privation, and cast as a last resort into this service. Often were we aroused from our sleep at night and summoned to the deck,

to hear with mourning hearts the funeral service, read by Colonel Stopford over the corpse of some unhappy being consigned to the deep by this visitation. Our surgeon, Fitzgibbon, an intellectual and indefatigable man, was almost exhausted by his onerous attendance on the sick and dying. However, every care that our means afforded was extended to the sufferers; and in due time, first the Island of Tobago was descried, and shortly afterwards Trinidad, to which we were specifically bound.

We made the Gulf of Paria by the passage called the Bocas, and entering by the Dragon's Mouth, gazed with admiration on that matchless inlet. It is scarcely possible for language to depict its grandeur. Indeed, some years afterwards, when I chanced to be engaged in conversation in Berkshire with a physician (whose name is well known), he affirmed that, having travelled in the four quarters of the globe, he had never, in that ample field of observation, beheld so sublime a spectacle as the entrance to the Gulf of Paria by the Dragon's Mouth.

The channel, of comparatively contracted breadth, was flanked by Trinidad on the left, and on the opposite side by a bold projecting point of the South American continent. Small rocky islands, rent asunder by some volcanic action, divided the passage into four distinct entrances. The north-west portion

of Trinidad abutting on the sea, was here exceedingly lofty and precipitous; the rocky outline displaying irregular overhanging masses, jutting seaward in formidable and fantastical shapes. All the indentations abounded with wild vegetable excrescences; and cacti with their red blossoms, dwarf aloes, and other exotics, displayed the tenacity of vegetable life in those glowing regions. In short, there was not a fissure of this rugged wall but teemed with bloom and beauty. Some few broader fragments favoured the occasional growth of trees, which, arching over the dark tide below, impressed the fancy with the notion that they looked timidly over to scan the secret of its ceaseless evolutions.

At the time of which I am speaking the summit was cultivated to the very verge of the precipice, and graceful banana trees (the crowning ornament of tropical cultivation) waved to and fro as the breeze inclined them, and seemed to display their verdant crests to allure and to delight the eye.

The sea flowing at the base, of almost unfathomable depth, rolled convulsively on with dark and fearful perturbation, working by ceaseless attrition huge caverns in the rock, into which it swept with a momentum at once magnificent and appalling.

The chief island on the right of this noble inlet was a rock of imposing elevation, split into numerous

protruding fragments, the main stem culminating to a lofty point. Two other divided masses showed only the original abruption, with gradually diminishing remnants.

It singularly happened that, as we surveyed this splendid piece of natural scenery at mid-day, a huge shark was disporting under the solid arch of one of these darkling caverns, and it was scarcely possible to resist a shudder at the contemplation of such a combination of the terrible, acclivous, and sublimely picturesque as those objects presented.

Entering the gulf we found a wide expanse of quiet water, denoting by its lighter hue a fathomable depth, and with an unruffled surface. We were shortly anchored off the port of Spain, the main harbour of Trinidad, and as doubts existed as to our reception, owing to the well-known hostility of Sir Ralph Woodford, the governor, to the cause of the Republic, it was designed that we should observe a respectful distance, in order to be free from his adverse surveillance.

Colonel English and the supercargo went on shore, but we were restrained from landing. We were visited by a custom-house boat, and its crew indulged in unlimited abuse of the patriots, their cause, and country. As we had been forewarned of the governor's enmity to the cause we had espoused, we

concluded that the governor's sentiments had infected the government functionaries, and hardly felt surprise at their denunciation of our expedition. They did their best to dissuade us from continuing our course, but, to the honour of the adventurers be it spoken, not a solitary individual was deterred from his purpose.

Late in the afternoon Colonel English came on board in a state of intense excitement, and instant directions were given to weigh anchor. The order was obeyed with the accustomed alacrity, and we quitted the Gulf of Paria through one of the minor passages of the Bocas, while all on board were too much engrossed with the absorbing topic of the Colonel's excitement to heed attentively the subdued character of scenery that marked our outward passage.

We sailed tranquilly throughout the night in that huge bite in the Caribbean sea which embosoms the port and town of Carupinar, the island of Margarita, the entrance to the Gulf of Cariaco, terminating at the Moro of Barcelona.

Early on the following day we were surprised to hear orders given to clear for action, and we saw with astonishment this movement forwarded. A meeting of the officers was convened by Colonel Stopford in the cabin, and then we learned from him that Sir Ralph Woodford had, at Trinidad, threatened

Colonel English with opposition, and declared that the "Fly," British brig of war, would dispute his entrance into Margarita, the Venezuelan settlement to which we were bound. Colonel English, in the madness of his rage, had determined to fight the "Fly," and hence our present preparations.

Colonel Stopford, in a speech of reasonable earnestness, put it to us to determine whether, in embarking to aid the South American cause, we had calculated upon a resistance to the British flag, whereby we should assume the character of outlaws. We were shocked at the bare idea, and unanimously resolved that we would not fire a shot against the flag of our nation; and our resolution, on this point, was communicated to the Colonel. Hostile preparations were consequently abandoned; but happily the "Fly" did not intercept us, and we made Margarita unopposed.

We descried the port to which we were consigned; but the strong and baffling currents, setting to the north-west, sent us drifting away from the desired port, and we strove in vain to reach it. We toiled all day, and throughout another night, and part of another day, in a vain attempt to stem this current, when fortunately we were observed from the bay of Juan Griego, and Admiral Brion (the commander of the Republic's naval forces) sent out a

vessel to advise and to direct us. Thus instructed by men accustomed to this sea, we bore up, and on the afternoon of the 7th April, 1819, we sailed into the bay of Juan Griego. A numerous fleet lay at anchor, the flag of Admiral Brion floating from the mainmast of the "Victoria," "a frigate" of the navy of Venezuela.

CHAP. V.

STATELY ENTRANCE TO JUAN GRIEGO. — MARCH TO NORTE : TO PAMPATAR. — MUTINOUS SPIRIT OF THE TROOPS. — ITS INCIDENTS AND RESULTS. — PROSPECT OF OFFICERS AND MEN. — MARGARITA. — ITS CONDITION AND STRENGTH. — GENERAL ARISMENDI. — RIVAL CHIEFS. — OPEN HOSTILITY. — THREATS AGAINST THE BRITISH. — THEIR PRECAUTIONS. — ARREST OF ARISMENDI. — RETARDED EXPECTATIONS TO EMBARK. — GENERAL ENGLISH. — HIS CONDUCT AND POSITION.

It was determined that due éclat should distinguish our ingress, and consequently the officers, arrayed in their rich uniforms, crowded the deck of the "Francis and Eliza;" while the colours of the regiment, new and beautifully emblazoned, borne by the two junior sub-lieutenants, floated from two opposite carronades on the quarter-deck.

A salute was fired, and duly returned by the "Victoria," and we entered the port of Juan Griego in this imposing style, to behold the shore lined with spectators, and the deck and shrouds of every vessel thronged with applauding partizans.

The same evening saw us not only disembarked, but in full march for Norté, a very pretty village three miles from the coast, where we were received and welcomed by General Arismendi (a man, as

will be hereafter shown, of remarkable character), who invited the officers to his house, and treated them with becoming hospitality. Here I first reposed in one of the huge cotton hammocks for the manufacture of which Margarita is celebrated. Not knowing the method of adaptation, I floundered sadly, and passed a restless night. When their use is well understood, nothing can be more luxurious than this mode of sleeping.

We passed the ensuing day at Norté, and then marched for Pampatar, a distance of three leagues, where the first divisions of the British Legion were awaiting our arrival. There we found an heterogeneous, disaffected rabble, to whom rations had been sparingly issued, and who had sighed in vain for pay. Every thing had been promised to them when the last division should arrive; and our junction with them infused a more hopeful spirit.

The day of promise had indeed come; arms were furnished, clothing fitted, but expectations of improved condition speedily vanished. No pay was forthcoming, nor were the rations distributed with systematic regularity. The men were destitute of bedding, and the cottages allotted them for quarters swarmed with fleas and other vermin; so that a complication of suffering and disappointments fairly exhausted their little remaining patience.

The really handsome uniforms of the officers served only to remind them of the excessive expense to which they had needlessly been put; and every heart was assailed by mortification for the present, and by doubts for our future prospect. Universal disaffection prevailed, and the officers determined to call a meeting, and to address a remonstrance to their commander, who was now promoted to the rank of general.

General English received our communication with the utmost displeasure, and directed the brigade major to notify to us his determination to suppress any such future insubordination, and to treat, as military delinquents, all who should attempt to dictate to him. His answer only served to inflame our discontent, and the most unreserved language was employed by many to express their determination.

Colonel Blosset, late of the 10th British regiment, summoned the officers to his quarters, and, as the lieutenant-colonel commanding the regiment, addressed the assembled meeting in terms of reasonable and friendly expostulation, and proffered the most judicious advice to us. He particularly dwelt upon the fact that we were now in a situation which demanded the utmost caution. Tumult and violence, he said, could only aggravate our condition, and he

implored us to aid him in reducing the men to obedience.

Colonel Blosset's appeal produced the happiest effect upon the officers, and all determined to use their best efforts to appease the excited spirit of the men. This, however, proved no easy task, for our authority was defied, and all our advice unheeded, until at length the whole body, by simultaneous consent, refused to parade.

Orders were issued one afternoon to get the regiment under arms at all hazards, and we knew that some important move was contemplated. It was, however, quite useless for us to exhort or to command, for a sullen obstinacy pervaded the entire body, and not a man would stir.

I was engaged in earnest remonstrance with my company (the Light Company), and was employing every art to induce the men to relent, when one of our field officers (Major Robertson) came up, and sternly demanded why my company was not under arms. I explained that it was vain for me to command, for that all refused to obey. Without a moment's hesitation, he drew his sword, and going up to the first man, asked if he intended to fall in. The fellow answered "No;" when instantaneously the sabre was upraised, and a blow inflicted that nearly cleft his skull.

Again, without a moment's pause, the same question was put to the next, who instantly jumped up and professed obedience. His example was now universally followed, and the Light Company was marched down to the "Salinas" (a series of sandy marshes frequently overflowed by the sea), where, by some such coercive means, the whole regiment had now been assembled.

A square was formed, and by the secret, and scarcely definable influence of disciplinary coherence, there stood this band of disaffected men, firm in phalanx, and silent as the grave. A drum-head court martial was speedily organised (of which I was a member), the principal delinquents were forthwith arraigned before it, and formal evidence having been adduced, each culprit was sentenced to receive three hundred lashes.

The Colonel ordered the customary preparations to be made: the triangles were consequently erected, and the first man commanded to strip. He was about to obey, when the Colonel appeared suddenly to relent, and, addressing the regiment, commented in feeling terms upon their disappointments, but at the same time stigmatised their insubordination. He dwelt eloquently upon the danger which open mutiny threatened to themselves, and to their officers, equally sharers with themselves in privation. He concluded

however by proclaiming pardon to the condemned, but declared his determination thenceforth to discard merciful considerations, and to inflict the full extent of every future sentence. The regiment was dismissed, and the men returned to their quarters, only to repeat, with tenfold aggravation, the scenes which had preceded the late useless ceremony.

We passed a night of feverish anxiety. Oaths, shouts, and execrations, became general: musket shots were fired; and, such was the wild excitement of the soldiers, that not an officer could issue from his quarters for fear of assassination. Every one asked another what this tumult could possibly portend? Some counselled acquiescence in the demands of the men, which seemed to indicate war upon the natives, and the capture of the island.

The morrow brought with it a lull in the pervading spirit, the result of exhaustion, and the Colonel promptly availed himself of the momentary calm again to embody the men, and at an early hour, but not without immense difficulty, the regiment was again under arms, and formed into square on the Salina.

Once more the drum-head became the signal for summary adjudication, and again was I a member of the court-martial. There stood nearly 1100 men, each armed with musket and bayonet; and yet such was either the mistrust of his neighbour, or, even in

this extremity, the instinctive sobriety of discipline, that not a countenance betokened resistance to authority. For my own part, imminent as our condition had become, I appreciated the danger of forbearance, and resolved, at all hazards, but still with an agitated mind, firmly to perform a perilous duty. The other members seemed equally determined, and judgment was unhesitatingly pronounced.

In this instance it proved not to be in vain, for, in the face of this mutinous host, the ringleaders were stripped and flogged, without a murmur from the ranks, and, on the dismissal of the men, we found the example had been successful, and order completely restored.

I can never forget the conviction forced upon me by the experience of those two fearful days. I became imbued with a spirit of stern determination, and a new disciplinarian principle seemed to take possession of my facultics.

Henceforth, no breach of duty was overlooked, nor the slightest symptom of disorder allowed to go unpunished, and, under these improved circumstances, the regiment progressed in military exercises, and few regiments under the British flag could better perform their evolutions.

Margarita, the island on which we were now located, was the external stronghold of the Vene-

zuelan republic. Its appearance from the sea exhibited a seared and sterile outline of desert hills, which indisposed the voyager to judge favourably of its internal cultivation. Nor did a casual inland survey much belie the outward prognostic. Still the island possessed many spots which served to redeem this first impression, and one good town, "the city of Asuncion," and several picturesque villages, betokened some advance in civilisation. One spot, the Valle de Margarita, a tropical counterpart of Matlock, extorted admiration from every beholder.

Upon the whole, however, Margarita was ill-cultivated, and rank indigenous shrubs were suffered to exhaust the capacity of the soil. Every imaginable species of the wild cactus abounded, and was permitted so to overrun the island, that any divergence from a beaten track became next to impossible. This apparent reproach to an industrial community proved its ultimate safeguard, for the sharp, unyielding prickles of this formidable plant so galled and disabled unskilful interlopers, that serious wounds, and long confinement, resulted from the laceration.

When Spain had decided, after the Peninsular campaign, to make a gigantic effort to recover the revolted provinces, and General Morillo, with a chosen Royalist army, repaired to the Coste Firma, his first design was to capture Margarita, and thus

deprive the insurgents of the ports that harboured their shipping. He consequently made a bold dash at this island, and, despising its rude inhabitants, made sure of its easy subjection.

The prickly cactus, however unthought of, ensured his discomfiture. The islanders, inured from youth to its intricacies, and skilful in threading them, met him at every turn, and utterly discomfited his chosen European bands. Solely owing to the prevalence of this plant, all his efforts failed, and he was glad to decamp, after having sustained a very serious loss. Margarita was now found to be impregnable; and although the whole surrounding coast of Gueria, Cumana, and Barcelona, was subject to the Spaniards, this little island mocked all their efforts, and harboured a squadron of formidable pretensions.

Pampatar, then occupied by the British Legion, was a fortified village at the south-western extremity of the island. It possessed a good bay, a fort capable of stern resistance, and was flanked on the land side by a bold, and somewhat mountainous acclivity, crowned by dilapidated fortifications. It had been the object of successive assault and defence, and could only be approached from within by devious passes, which, if disputed, it would require no small effort to force. I am particular in describing

its intricacies, in order the more strikingly to illustrate a forthcoming occurrence.

When the British Legion had mustered its entire strength at Margarita, the island was under the government of General Arismendi, a native chief who had risen from the humble pursuit of a fisherman. He had borne an active part in the revolutionary war, and had signalised himself by the most sanguinary, and merciless conduct towards the Royalists. He was bold and ambitious, but yet so subtle and insinuating that he had contrived to engross the devotion of the islanders, who, under his guidance, had signally repulsed Morillo and the Spanish army.

He aspired to the command of the British Legion, which, with about 300 German riflemen, recently arrived, and such native troops as he could have selected, would have formed a respectable force to execute plans which Arismendi was contemplating. A respectable squadron, consisting of a sloop of war, several well-armed brigs, and many clipping schooners, and smaller craft, occupied the bay of Juan Griego, under Admiral Brion, a native of Curaçoa, who proved to be a most incompetent commander, and was manifestly bent more upon plunder than upon conquest. This fleet was supported by spoliation upon Spanish commerce, and in that object had been most successful.

Here, then, Arismendi had in prospect abundant transport for his favourite enterprise, and was actively employed in pre-arrangement, when his darling scheme was annihilated by the arrival of General Urdaneta, with a commission from Bolivar to assume the command of the troops, and to conduct an expedition which the President himself had determined upon. The fallen countenance of the island chief revealed the secret perturbation of his heart, and a malignant desire to thwart his opponent became hourly more observable. At length the dispute between the rival chiefs became so implacable that no alternative remained but for one or the other to succumb.

Whether Arismendi had actually appealed to his island partizans, or whether he was accused of doing so merely to ground a plea for overt hostility on the part of Urdaneta, is a matter of doubt; but one day we were surprised by the arrival of a boat at Pampatar, conveying General Valdes, the next in command to Urdaneta, sent expressly to warn the British Legion against a concerted *coup d'armes* to surprise and annihilate them. The island militia was said to have been aroused, and a plan formed to massacre the foreign troops at Pampatar.

Here, therefore, in our adopted country, and while supporting our chosen cause, did we find ourselves suddenly counselled to defend our lives against the

reputed treachery of allies. Consequently, dispositions were promptly made to secure our position. The passes were occupied, the guards trebled, and strong parties armed to the teeth nightly patrolled, to watch and repel any possible aggression.

At length the brig of war, "Libertador," suddenly anchored in the harbour of Pampatar, bringing as prisoner General Arismendi, who had been arrested at his house at Norté, and sent for complete security to this port. A guard of the British Legion to act as marines daily took special charge of the captive, until arrangements could be made to forward him for trial to Angostura, and all kinds of sinister reports concerning his future fate were in circulation.

For four successive months did we occupy Pampatar, daily excited, but weekly and monthly tantalised by current rumours of prospective embarkation, ending in an inactivity which was positively suicidal. A projected expedition to the Main was most mischievously retarded, to the great injury both of our resources, and our zeal and enthusiasm for the cause.

Meanwhile, nothing would have disturbed our well-sustained discipline but the irregular issue of rations, owing solely to the absence of foresight and business-like arrangement.

Increased alienation between General English and the officers occurred, until we were led to regard him in the light of an enemy. Our interests thenceforth

became distinct; but here we first began to divine the secret of his position.

General English had stipulated for the repayment to Herring and Richardson, for their equipment of this expedition, by the embarkation of mules for the colonies, and out of that fund English was to receive his acknowledged quota. The ships, consequently, after the disembarkation of the troops, awaited the fulfilment of this promise; but waited in vain.

It was one of the weakest points of the Republican government to enter into any undertaking in order to insure immediate succour, of whatever description, without a moment's disposition to fulfil their contracts. It was the damning feature in this otherwise noble struggle, and cast a stain upon the honour of the Republic which spread universal distrust and dismay amongst all who had sought commercial intercourse with it.

In the instance of English and his trained bands, the disregard of contracts sealed and settled in Europe became invested with the character of well-merited retribution. There could not remain a doubt that sordid calculations had actuated him, and that he had organised a force by chicanery and misrepresentation, solely for his own personal aggrandisement. When, therefore, he himself experienced faithlessness, it was but an equitable reaction upon his own selfish designs.

CHAP. VI.

DEPARTURE FROM PAMPATAR. — ISSUE OF PAY. — SAIL TO PORSUELAS. — BARCELONA. — THE CAPTURE, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. — THE MORO TAKEN. — THE SPANISH FLEET. — A MOCK PURSUIT. — THE ENEMY'S ESCAPE. — ADMIRAL BRION. — POLTRONERY AND GASCONADE. — CHARACTER OF GENERAL URDANETA. — ITS EFFECT UPON THE ENTERPRISE. — THE BOLDNESS OF THE ENEMY. — THEIR OVERTURES TO PROMOTE DESERTION. — THE EFFECT UPON THE BRITISH. — CAPTURE OF DESERTERS. — THEIR TRIAL AND EXECUTION. — INROADS OF THE ENEMY. — A RESTLESS CAMP.

FOUR tedious months did we of the British Legion exhaust in drill and fretful expectation at this miserable station, Pampatar. Exercise, evolutions, occasional reviews, and weekly promises of departure served to occupy and to excite us, but at length the moment for departure did arrive; and an instalment of pay to the extent of four dollars for each officer, and two dollars for every soldier, having been ostentatiously issued, the Legion marched from Pampatar to Juan Griego for embarkation.

It might well be asked, why had we tarried thus long? The *traversée* was short, the lengthened preparation of the ships unaccountable, and the exhaustion of provisions ruinous. For four months had we been daily rising at 3 A.M., and marching, drilling, and countermarching. We had struggled against

mutiny, semi-starvation, and internal discord; whereas it appeared to every keen observer that a week's real activity might have sufficed for every requisite disposition of the fleet.

When we evacuated Pampatar, the natives thronged the roads, and *vivas* long and loud greeted us through every inhabited district. We marched on to Juan Griego, and there permission was freely accorded to the men to roam at large, and drunkenness grievously prevailed. The following morning all was in activity for embarkation, and the scarcely sober force was disposed of in the fleet, which sailed that very afternoon.

Barcelona, merely a short twenty-four hours' sail from Margarita, was our destination. We carried with us whole families, who had been estranged from their homes on the main, and who now anxiously sought, under our protection, to revisit their native localities. Our decks were consequently crowded with women and children, and hope and joy made them indifferent to the casualties of warfare.

Very early on the following evening we anchored in the bay of Porsuelas, distant from the city about four leagues; and there a landing was safely effected early on the succeeding morning. Still we lingered, for procrastination seemed to be the guiding rule of our supine commanders; and although we could

clearly perceive telegraphic communications between the Moro (a lofty and strongly fortified post at the entrance to the Barcelona river) and the town, no step was taken to arrest their intercourse until very early on the ensuing morning. Then, indeed, we marched forward with two field-pieces, which were quickly imbedded in mud, and all but deserted; and about noon, after various halts, we reached the outskirts of the city.

A reconnoissance indicated the desertion by the enemy of the town, after a futile attempt to burn the bridge, over a river shoal but broad. We saved the bridge, and rushed sword in hand into the town, only to find it deserted by the enemy, and completely in our possession. Guards were established, and then the troops were allowed to roam at large, and, independently, to chose their quarters. Whether by accident or design I cannot say, but ardent spirits were found in every deserted house; and thence ensued a scene of the most appalling inebriation, which produced rioting and disorganisation.

Late in the evening we received orders to withdraw the troops to a suburb beyond the bridge, and sleep at length restored the men to their senses.

At sunrise the following morning, several companies (mine amongst the number) were marched to the attack of the Moro, distant from Barcelona about two

leagues. The fleet had moved from Porsuelas, and had anchored without the range of the guns of the fortress, but a swarm of boats indicated, on our approach, a settled purpose to assault the citadel. The Spanish garrison, however, alarmed by our active preparations, had determined to seek safety in flight, and abandoning an almost impregnable position, they rushed down from their elevated post, and fled into the open country, after firing at the advancing troops two guns.

The Commandant, and a few of the garrison, the last to retire, were intercepted and killed. The slain were stripped forthwith, and their bodies, pierced with wounds, were suffered to lie unburied, and became the prey of various species of vultures, especially the Turkey-buzzards, which abound in these regions; a few prisoners also were taken.

We took quiet possession of the Moro, and the more we surveyed it, the more were we surprised to find so strong a hold thus tamely forsaken. We found it well stored with provisions, and manifestly calculated to make a stout defence.

But now a fresh cause of excitement arose. The Spanish fleet had been despatched from Cumana, in order to succour the Moro, and was anchored in the very bay of Porsuelas, which we had so recently left. We subsequently learned that Admiral Brion, ere

he was assured of the advance of the British Legion, had been so alarmed by the proximity of a squadron, greatly inferior to his own, that he was wavering whether to remain or to decamp. The officers around him (principally British) had, however, so urged him into an active demonstration, that he was saved, by their intercession, from this foul disgrace, and something akin to dignified activity pervaded the fleet, in order to co-operate with us. No sooner, therefore, was the Moro in our possession, than from its apex we beheld the boats of the Spanish squadron, crowded with men, and pulling vigorously to reach the base of the Moro.

A shot was most unadvisedly fired at them, which announced the fall of the fortress, and the boats put about, and returned to their ships. The utmost importunity was employed, in which General English (who, to do him mere justice, was not deficient in courage) joined, to convince Brion that he should not allow the enemy to escape, and at length, when precious time had been wasted, by which the enemy profited, he reluctantly assented, and volunteers from the British Legion, to act as marines, were invited to embark.

I was one of the number, and with a portion of the Light Company was allotted to the "Victoria," the flag ship. The enemy's squadron had, by the tardiness of Brion, got so far ahead, that the pursuit appeared to

be a mockery, when suddenly the wind became so singularly varying and capricious, that a collision appeared to be inevitable, and all was cleared away for action. We had even proceeded so far as to put distinguishing badges on the arms of our sailors, to mark them as friends in the event of boarding, and in the midst of all this animating preparation, there stood the Admiral, pale and tremulous, and exhibiting all the external symptoms of the coward.

His demeanour had been universally scrutinised, and no one hesitated to aver that the enemy's squadron had found safety (for it did escape into the Bay of Cumana), first by his want of gallant promptitude, and secondly by every nautical manœuvre that tended to impede our progress. He was, in short, a mere mercenary adventurer, and quite unfitted for a chivalrous enterprise. No sooner was the enemy protected by the guns of Cumana, than this blustering poltroon hoisted the patriot over the royalist ensign, and fired a salute of twelve guns, an empty gasconade, which became the theme of universal derision.

The fleet returned to Barcelona, and the troops temporarily embarked rejoined their corps. We had now to await the tactics of the general, and nothing more puerile and inadventurous could well be imagined.

General Urdaneta, the commander of the land forces, selected be it remembered by Bolivar himself, was of diminutive stature, pale, effeminate, and a slave to indolence. . He was a man so inert, and apparently mindless, that no cause could by possibility have been confided to a more incompetent leader. The history of the world (and I give an unbounded range) might be ransacked in vain to produce a man more singularly disqualified to act with energy. It was vain to look in him for one redeeming characteristic: not the remotest fitness for command could be discerned. A miserable sensualist, he took the field accompanied by two mistresses, and lounged from morning till night in a hammock, the slave to women and cigars. Enthusiasm and boldness were required for the occasion, and might, if found, have proved irresistible; but we, in this man, contemplated qualities calculated to extinguish every hope of success.

Without Barcelona, at the suburb of Portugar, we continued inactive, until the enemy, emboldened by our torpor, made incursions into the city, and in one instance slaughtered our soldiers in the very streets of Barcelona.

Proclamations from the royalist chief, printed in English, were circulated amongst our troops, and a reward was offered to every man who would desert to him. They failed not in their effect, for such was

the disgust of the men at the non-observance of any one stipulation in their favour, that scarcely an individual could be found to resist the lure, and the whole legion was prepared to desert.

Here let me observe, without undue egotism, that I had paid devoted attention to my own company, and had, to the best of my ability, worked incessantly for their advantage. I had, therefore, won their confidence, and if there was an officer in the British Legion who could influence the men, I was the one to whom they would have listened.

Consequently, when we learned that these proclamations had been circulated, and a copy was placed in my own hands, I mustered my company, and addressed them in terms of the most impassioned earnestness. I appealed to them as Englishmen, as men of traditional faith and devotion, pointed out to them the proverbial untrustworthiness of Spaniards, and besought them to cling, for the honour of our country, to their motto "morir e vencer." I was listened to with respectful attention, but could not fail to perceive that my address was unsuccessful. Even my most trusted non commissioned officer (Serjeant Dunn) looked unutterable incredulity, and seemed manifestly infected with the general disquietude.

That very evening nearly forty men deserted,

and it was evident that the whole force was prepared to follow their example. A sudden incident of the morrow opportunely occurred to arrest this overt defection. At noon a band of half-naked blacks arrived at our head-quarters, bringing with them, as prisoners, five British fugitives, who had sought to join the enemy. A general court martial was forthwith convened, of which I was the judge advocate, a post by the way to which I had been appointed in general orders, and the duties of which I had from time to time previously exercised. The fact of desertion, with a view to reach the enemy, was indisputable, and the doom of death was consequently pronounced upon the whole of the delinquents.

Without a moment's loss of time, the troops were marshalled in the square of Barcelona, and for the first time I took the head of my company—the second company of the legion, to which I had only just been appointed captain. As I knew full well the awful nature of the sentence, I felt ready to sink under a weight of painful excitement. Again, had we the opportunity to test the efficacy of discipline under the direst circumstances, for, without a word of previous intimation, and before the sentences had been proclaimed, the brigade major hastily selected two files from every company, and without a moment's hesitation did they allow themselves to be

ranged before a given spot, for a purpose which might now be clearly divined. The unhappy culprits were conducted into the centre of the square, and advanced with an assumed indifference, which ill disguised their real apprehensions. They seemed not to anticipate a sentence to death.

The proceedings of the court martial were read aloud, and the fatal doom pronounced. Then, indeed, arose a wild wail of lamentation contrasting mournfully with the past minute's affected unconcern. A communication was made to General English by the chief of the staff, that General Urdaneta would so far neutralise the rigorous condemnation of the whole, as to require the execution of two only of the delinquents, and that lot should determine the sacrifice.

A few minutes sufficed to decide the momentous question between those miserable men, and to witness the execution of the sentence upon the two who were doomed to die. A volley from the selected firing party consigned them to eternity, and the troops having marched past the prostrate bodies in open order, returned to their quarters, where the furor for desertion seemed now to be extinguished. But for this timely example, it was more than conjectured that 200 men would have decamped that very evening.

We returned to Portugar (the suburb in which

we were located), and there, while we remained in deplorable inactivity during the day, we were nightly aroused by incursions from the enemy, who appeared to be indefatigable in the design to alarm and to annoy us. So frequent were their assaults upon our picquets, that the bugle would summon the whole force to arms six or seven times in the course of one night.

The men were forbidden to take off their accoutrements for sleep, and the officers reposed with their swords drawn and placed beside them. In the midst of this nightly excitement, I realised the full import of those lines in the Fire Worshippers of Moore: —

> "Upon whose ear the signal sound
> Of strife and death is hourly breaking,
> Who sleeps with head upon the sword
> His fever'd hand must grasp in waking."

Thus we continued ingloriously torpid, while an enemy, not half our number, was allowed incessantly to molest us.

Meanwhile, our effeminate general was lolling in his hammock, smoking from morning till night, and gambling with his staff.

CHAP. VII.

THE CONDITION OF THE CAUSE. — INCENTIVES TO ENTERPRISE. — THE MISERABLE RESULTS OF INCOMPETENCE. — MESSAGE TO GENERAL BERMUDEZ. — VACILLATING COUNSELS. — AN EXCITABLE ADVENTURE. — ITS DETAILS. — CHARACTER OF BARCELONA. — A HOUSE OF DEFENCE. — BERMUDEZ'S FORCE ARRIVES. — FINDS BARCELONA DESERTED BY THE PATRIOTS. — IS DESPOILED AND DISPERSED.

THAT period was one which demanded that ordinary vigour should be exercised with merely ordinary aptitude. Up to that moment, the Independents had proved their superiority on the open plains, the trials of which stultified the ablest evolutions of their European enemies, who, in fact, could not exist upon them. Morillo, the Royalist commander, had there pursued with energy a foe whom he had determined to crush, but there he found an enemy inured to a region which yielded nothing, and was alternately parched and periodically flooded.

In vain did he advance to find an untiring foe retreating with easy celerity, where his men panted under heat and privation, and sank exhausted and unnerved. No sooner was his distress at its climax, and his force disorganised, than this ragged fugitive

force would turn upon him, harass his retreat, and cut off his numerous stragglers. Assailed by the native cavalry clothed in red pouchos, or dyed blankets, under the redoubtable Paez (once a herdsman), would the wretched Spaniards find tactics and discipline unavailing against a combination of physical obstacles which in nowise affected their hardy antagonists. Morillo lost the flower of his army ere he had fully appreciated the impracticable character of the plains.

Thenceforth, he occupied and defended the fertile and cultivable portions which acknowledged the king's supremacy, from which he could procure subsistence for his army, and where they could repose in some degree with safety. Meanwhile, the disclosure of their strength had emboldened the native leaders, who were pressing upon Morillo beyond the waters of the Apure, hemming him in, and patiently abiding coming events.

The Royalists had long occupied the coast of Gueria, and the whole sea-board extending from Carupinar to Puerto Bello, and they bore rule over districts of rich fertility.

The wide and inexhaustible plains were in the hands of the patriots, together with the island of Margarita, and the navigation of the Orinoco, upon whose banks the isolated town of Angostura stood, a

point of difficult accessibility, but the seat of the republican government, and where its congress was assembled. It is only necessary to consult the map, and a cursory glance will show how essential it was to the liberating cause that the easy capture of Barcelona should not have proved abortive. At that moment in particular, when the distractions of the mother country had so paralysed the Royalists and emboldened the Independents, it only needed vigorous counsels and competent commanders, on the part of the latter, to give an impetus to the cause of unspeakable value. From a locality so eminently favourable as Barcelona, whence a base of aggressive operations might have ensued, the advantages to be derived from prompt and energetic measures were incalculable. But what avail advantageous positions, and hopeful prospects, under the guidance of feeble or mercenary commanders? The sequel of this miserable history will give the answer.

No sooner had Urdaneta captured Barcelona, than he wisely despatched a trusty messenger to General Bermudez, who commanded a guerilla force of cavalry on the most contiguous plains, and urged him to join the invading force with all the horses and cattle he could collect. Bermudez, with a promptitude that did him honour, hastened to effect this most important junction, little dreaming of the weak

and vacillating character of his brother general, who meanwhile was concocting and, anon, abandoning other schemes.

One day we were ordered to prepare to evacuate Barcelona, and to march over the mountains to the plains, and the next we found this arrangement repudiated, and a new resolution formed to embark the whole force, and proceed to the attack of Cumana, a place most strongly fortified. The latter plan was hurriedly adopted on finding that the Spanish squadron had quitted Cumana, and sailed to some other port. Bermudez and his auxiliary force were lost sight of, Barcelona was deserted, and we embarked and sailed for Cumana.

Before, however, quitting this fruitless conquest, I must relate an occurrence which, at the time, proved to me of a highly romantic and exciting character, albeit barren of results.

Notwithstanding the temporary suppression of desertion amongst our men, the Spaniards still clung to the hope of seducing them to join their standard, and, by means of itinerant natives, circulated secret overtures amongst the English troops. A soldier named Williamson had been induced to meet certain Spanish emissaries, and was one evening returning stealthily from the rendezvous, when he was pounced upon by a picquet, and hurried to the quarters of the general.

So completely was the man abashed by his surprise and capture, that he revealed the truth, and implored pardon. The general, and staff and field officers, were hastily summoned to General Urdaneta's quarters, and after a hurried consultation, an aide-de-camp was despatched with a message to me, desiring that I would select from the regiment thirty trusty men, and bring them thoroughly armed, and provided with ammunition, and prepared for a special enterprise.

No time was lost in obeying this summons, and I was promptly ushered into the general's presence, where stood the faithless Williamson, looking the very picture of terror and dejection. He was a man upwards of six feet high, and of robust proportions. I received the necessary instructions, and was privately enjoined to put no trust in my guide, but to watch him narrowly, and to shoot him the very moment I might perceive he was acting the part of a traitor. Be it remembered that this war was one of extirpation: death to all taken in arms on either side was the acknowledged rule, and hence the feverish excitement of all hazardous enterprises.

The peculiar nature of the ground had been explained to me, and, at a given spot, I was to seek for, and dislodge or capture a large picquet of Spanish cavalry. The night was exceedingly dark, and our course scarcely discernible; but no sooner had I

emerged from the town, than I solemnly warned Williamson of the fate that would await him should he attempt to betray me. He swore to be true, and my men vowed to stand by me to the last.

Williamson must have more than once trodden this intricate road, for he seemed to know every inch of it. He took us down a steep descent; thence over a field of white flowering weeds, so tall as to obscure our sight; we entered a jungle, whence he picked his way to a winding path, and at length came to the prostrate ruins of a cottage, over which we climbed.

Again, through jungle he found out another path so overhung with twigs as to be scarcely passable; and here he notified that we were close upon an oblong space, which usually harboured the Spanish detachment. My pistols were ready cocked, and my men were close behind me. I whispered a caution to the serjeant, and putting Williamson aside, I crept with lightest step into the space, which proved to be what he had described it. I was the first to enter, and the men one by one followed me, only to find the spot deserted, and the enemy gone. The ground contained innumerable prints of horses' hoofs, so that the truth of the man's story became evident, and we returned deeply dejected at not finding an enemy to encounter. It is possible they might have heard us

amongst the jungle, and quietly decamped, for the darkness was such as to favour a retreat to those familiar with the locality. Williamson was pardoned on my report of his truthfulness on this occasion, and he rejoined his corps.

Barcelona was a town of respectable pretensions. It contained a spacious "plaza de las Armas," and some well-disposed streets, and had, in former times, been defended by a citadel which could harrow the mind by examples of conflict and slaughter. A patriot garrison, hemmed in, and reduced to extremities, aware also of the cruel death that awaited them, should they become prisoners to the Royalists, had determined to fire the fort, and perish in its ruins. They did so, and the dilapidation resulting from that catastrophe had never been sufficiently repaired, but remained to testify to the desperation induced by a merciless contest.

The church, a magnificent structure, very much resembled a cathedral. It was sacked and gutted on this occasion, and every valuable appurtenance was removed. In the general despoliation of this edifice I possessed myself of some trifling silver relics, and had indeed assisted in the authorised search for valuables. Without the town, the prevalence of a thin and weedy species of jungle extending on every side, except where the river checked its extension, fur-

nished at once the solution of its insalubrity, and the difficulty attending its defence; for the town was perfectly open. At Portugar, where we had been quartered, there stood a fortified building peculiar to this country, and originating in the exigencies of such a war. I subsequently saw many of these structures, which in times of extremity appeared to have accomplished their object, and to have afforded a safe asylum to those who had previously been dispersed, and reduced to extremities.

It was a species of block-house, rudely but strongly constructed, usually measuring from 80 to 100 feet in length by 40 in breadth, with a height of some 30 or 40 feet. Three several stages, with standings of three or four feet, wound round the internal wall, accessible to numerous loopholes or narrow strips, sufficient to enable the eye to survey and the musket to be directed. If the immured party chanced to be well provided with food and ammunition, they proved to be impregnably secured in a country which generally defied the transit of artillery.

Such was Barcelona, and such was the position, open to the sea and accessible to Margarita, which these wretched tacticians had occupied, and abandoned. Before however finally quitting Barcelona, let me still further expose their irresolution and incompetency.

Bermudez, I have already stated, had been invited to join Urdaneta with cattle and horses. That wild and swarthy chief, whose daring and cruelty had taught the Spaniards to shudder at his name, received the summons from Barcelona, and with laudable alacrity hastened to obey it. He collected horses (which would have proved invaluable auxiliaries under our circumstances) and an immense herd of cattle, and traversing the intermediate country with tact and judgment, he at length safely reached Barcelona, only to find to his dismay that he had been allured there to his ruin.

Urdaneta had decamped, the Spaniards occupied Barcelona in force, and Bermudez was fiercely attacked, and despoiled of all that precious succour which had cost him so much pains to concentrate. Most of his force were either killed or captured, and the remnant were only saved by rushing over the bridge to Portugar, and by defending themselves in the block-house which I have just described.

There he made a gallant defence until night, and then rushed into the wild mountainous country contiguous, and struggled against every sort of privation until he had conducted a mere fraction of his followers to the confines of the plains, where the rule of the insurgents once more insured his safety.

Here then, at a glance, the meanest observer might

behold a splendid opportunity defeated by a series of blunders too gross and humiliating to admit of any sort of palliation. In competent hands, what might not have been expected to result from the felicitous junction of our effective force with that of Bermudez? The aid of cavalry, however circumscribed, would have proved invaluable; while the inhabitants, timidly shrinking from their homes, awed by the relentless butcheries of the contest, would have taken heart and returned to countenance the cause which most of them devoutly applauded. The first subsequent meeting between Urdaneta and Bermudez must have been one of no ordinary interest. They did meet at Maturin, on the border of the plains; but what occurred at that strange interview never transpired.

CHAP. VIII.

A NEW EXPEDITION. — A STRATAGEM TO DECEIVE AN ENEMY. — TRIALS OF THE BIVOUAC. — DISPOSITIONS FOR AN ATTACK. — TREACHERY. — A STORMING PARTY. — REPULSE. — AFTER INCIDENTS. — PRISONERS. — COLD-BLOODED SLAUGHTER. — ADVANCED PICQUET. — INLAND PROSPECTS.

MEANWHILE, the force before Barcelona had been embarked, and sailed for Cumana. The fleet duly arrived there, and the troops were landed upon a beach of shingles, and there passed the night. What with excitement, and the ceaseless roar of the sea upon this stony beach, I found sleep impossible, and arose in the morning to encounter a cloudless sun.

A force of some hundreds of natives under Colonel Montes (who had long invested the mountain heights contiguous to the town) joined us, and we beheld with some surprise our tatterdemalion allies. In the afternoon we commenced our march by an open space which could be easily discerned from Cumana, and here a shallow stratagem was practised in order to deceive the enemy, scarcely, however, calculated to mislead. We marched six paces apart, and this extended line was designed to cajole the Spaniards into the beliéf that our force was of multiplied strength.

The day was close and sultry, and, as we marched through stunted groves, the heat was so intolerable that an aide-de-camp of General Urdaneta actually died of suffocation. We waded through a broad stream and bivouacked on its banks, and there passed the night. Again, all possibility of rest was forbidden by the ceaseless torment of the insects that infested the spot. In the morning we marched to an extended sandy plain, thinly skirted with wood, which offered the minimum of shelter against a burning sun. Moreover, we found such a scarcity of water, that no search succeeded in procuring it within a reasonable distance.

Before us lay a range of gentle uplands, sufficient to hide from our view the immediate hilly outskirt of the town of Cumana, where bristling batteries, watchfully guarded, awaited our attack, and our right was flanked by the Gulf of Cariaco. Here again, for the third night, I found rest impossible, and experienced all the symptoms arising from want of sleep, the absence of wholesome food, and the exposure to tropical heat, with an insufficient supply of water. A native force could have endured this complication of trials without injury, but upon Europeans they told fearfully. Another day was thus passed, but yet no communication with the fleet served to fortify our spirits. At length Brion had discovered

— what an hour's survey might have taught him — that a channel, without the enemy's range, would admit him into the Gulf of Cariaco, and we found at length our camp accessible to boats from the fleet.

An onslaught upon the batteries was now reluctantly adopted by our general, after a prolonged conference with the British officers, and the following morning was appointed for this, to us, welcome adventure.

Volunteers were invited to form the storming party, and, to the honour of British enterprise be it spoken, the numbers were so great that choice became a difficulty. I should blush to avow that I was backward. I was not, and my services, with those of many others, were accepted. Of course the night passed heavily and sleeplessly, and again had I to ruminate upon all past and coming incidents with feverish perturbation unassuaged by sleep.

The morrow came, and with it the silent muster and a noiseless march. While darkness still prevailed, the entire force was in motion, and staff officers stole along the advancing divisions to enjoin silence. Two thousand men were now creeping in serried array, beneath uplifting crags, and through devious defiles. Not a word was spoken, and so light was the tread of this obedient band, that nothing save the fact denoted their measured footsteps.

Guides furnished by the guerilla chief Montes were to lead the attacking columns to an eminence crowned by the fort of Agua Santa; a block-house defended by a deep ditch, mounting two guns of heavy calibre, and furnished with all subsidiary offensive missiles.

So rife however were the jealousies of contending chiefs during this struggle, that no ingenuity could unveil their designs or motives. In this instance some latent influence prevailed, and we were unquestionably betrayed. The first of two eminences was treacherously selected by the guide for our ascent, which proved to be the wrong one, and while we were toiling with breathless eagerness to reach the summit, and encounter the enemy, day began to dawn, and the Spaniards in Agua Santa, discerning our intention and divining our error, opened upon us a murderous fire, and we suddenly awoke to the contemplation of the snare into which we had fallen. A German officer named Friedhenthal, hastily conceiving the treachery of the Creole guide, felled him to the earth, and there he lay a lifeless example to premeditated faithlessness, although the poor wretch had doubtless only followed the instructions of his chief.

Meanwhile, all our secret caution had been uselessly exhausted; the enemy was aroused, and our daring

was now put to the test. Down this ill-fated hill the party rushed, and, led on by Captain Sadler of the British Legion (whose enthusiasm urged him forward) we shouted, and toiled up the now well-defined acclivity, and, in spite of shot, musketry, and hand-grenades, surmounted all obstacles, and closely invested the fort; the most elevated, by the way, of all the defences of the town.

And now, other batteries directed their fire equally against the besiegers and the besieged, and a compound of deadly projectiles assailed Santa Agua, in order to annihilate us. The storming party numbered about 300, and was supported by the entire force below, which, in consequence of the fire poured upon it, had successively contracted from divisions into sections, and there stood to endure, and to support.

In a few minutes Agua Santa must inevitably have been ours, when, to our surprise and disgust, the bugles sounded a retreat, for a panic had seized our commander, and not all the entreaties of our countrymen could persuade the craven chief to persevere in the attack. Down this precipitous hill therefore were we compelled to hurry, smarting under the rage and indignation which such instability of purpose could not fail to provoke. The guns of Agua Santa and those of every fort able to assail us hurled their

fire thickly upon us, and we rejoined the main-body with the loss of two officers killed, and seventy-five men killed or wounded, so heavy and destructive was the cannonade which we had encountered.

No language can describe our indignant reprobation of these wretched manœuvres. All the puerile indecision of Barcelona was absorbed in our unspeakable contempt for this crowning pusillanimity of our leader. Execrations both from officers and men were loud and ceaseless, and many vowed from that moment to seize the earliest opportunity to sever themselves from a cause thus hopelessly conducted.

But a truce with these reflections. We had yet to combat, and under very strange circumstances. The troops had retrograded to a spot supposed to be safely distant from the enemy's guns. The officers had fallen out, and were crowding to discuss the miserable details of this ignoble day, when a round shot, fired from Cumana, came booming through the air, and fell in the very midst of this excited circle. Happily it struck nobody, but no time was lost in effecting a further retreat.

While this last movement was progressing, a fusillade was suddenly heard from the advance, and flight and pursuit of some sort became manifest. The fact was, a party of Spanish soldiers, returning from some post on the Gulf of Cariaco, had just landed

in order to escape from an enemy of whose presence they had little dreamed. They attempted to cut their way through our force, but most of them were killed, and some few captured. After this little episode, the troops returned to their bivouac on the sandy plain, and a march over mountains which loomed majestically in the distance, became our future prospect.

We returned to the camp, and the same exposure to the sun and absence of all necessary shelter and sustenance recurred. The prisoners taken, and they were a small part of those who had been sacrificed on the instant, were tied to trees, and in that condition awaited their doom. Amongst them was a young Spanish captain of elegant, and most prepossessing exterior; and as he there stood hopelessly in the hands of unrelenting enemies, he would yet smile at our casual jokes, and affect an indifference, which, from the nature of the contest, could only have been assumed. Poor fellow, his momentary distraction proved to be the fitful light that so often precedes some horrible convulsion, for he smiled his last upon this world.

No sooner was it known that these wretched captives were to be sacrificed to implacable international resentment, than the British portion of the force hastened to employ their best efforts to

avert the last extremity. A solemn protest was presented in our names to General Urdaneta, and our repugnance to this ungenerous sacrifice was importunately urged. Mark ye, who delight in transcendant liberalism, the answer to our merciful remonstrance from the man who, a rabid republican, had displayed fatuity at Barcelona, and something analogous to cowardice in the recent encounter with the forts. Mark, I say, this "patriot" in his decision upon our representation, and then ponder upon the cruel exigencies of such a warfare. "If I allow," said he, "prisoners to be spared who would in their turn have slaughtered my followers, I can never reckon upon their devotion, and not a man would serve the cause. The thing is impossible!"

The murder of these hapless men was the consequence of that decision, and in the dead of night they were conducted to a contiguous spot, and were there pierced by the rude spears of the natives, until they died covered by countless wounds. I subsequently went to the fatal spot, and there, with an agony of mind which I cannot attempt to describe, gazed upon their mutilated remains, and looked with horror upon the mangled corpse of that young Spanish captain, whom I had seen so recently smiling at our passing jokes.

That scene was a death-blow to all my past en-

thusiasm in the Republican cause, and several officers whom I shall hereafter name, participating with me in the detestation for cold-blooded butchery, conspired from that moment to elude this detested service.

In the meantime duty was to be performed, and the safety of the force to be consulted. That very day the general orders designated me as captain of the advanced picquet; and as day waned, I marched with my guard to the prescribed position, and was admonished that the safety of the army depended on my vigilance.

I have already told the tale of my privation of sleep, and its consequent enfeeblement; and I can truly aver, that such was my prostration, that nothing but the stubborn determination of the heart could have aroused me to undertake this responsible duty. In the course of the afternoon I was so ill, that several of my personal friends conjured me not to go. Although I felt sorely attenuated, yet I so dreaded the slightest misapprehension of my motives, that I resolved, at all hazards, to obey the call, and, mustering my guard, marched to the advanced limit of our camp.

In this instance I experienced what, in after life, has proved an axiom. Resist a momentary besetting infirmity; reject the couch, the doctor, and the

draught, and you will regain more strength and elasticity than any nursing or compound can assure you. The momentous charge with which I was invested aroused me from my lethargy; and, despite of sleeplessness and privation, I was active and alert.

On this occasion I had a rare opportunity of witnessing the exhaustless devotion of a woman's affection. One of the men of this picquet had been followed from England by his wife, who had adhered to him through every vicissitude, and had now accompanied him to this most dangerous post. I planted my sentries, and allowed the remainder of the party to lie down; and there this faithful creature reposed beside her husband, and when it became his turn to patrol, she arose, and patiently watched his movements.

A sortie from Cumana had been deemed more than probable, but the night passed off without molestation from the enemy, and an hour after daybreak I was directed to rejoin the camp, where I found the whole force ready to march towards the towering mountain masses which separate the coast from the plains.

CHAP. IX.

PROMOTION. — A NOVEL MARCH. — INDIAN GLUTTONY. — REAL SLEEP. — A WILD MOUNTAIN ASPECT. — A RURAL BREAKFAST. — STORMY INCIDENTS. — CUMANACOA, AND SUPERLATIVE TOBACCO. — MOUNTAIN STREAMS, AND THEIR DANGERS. — THE LAST OF THE HILLS. — A PEEP UPON THE PLAINS. — A SWOLLEN RIVER, AND A COURT MARTIAL.

THE death of Captain Sadler, one of the two officers who had fallen the previous day, had left the light company, the *élite* of the regiment, without a head, and on my return I found myself promoted to the command of that company. As I was the junior captain, I think I may, fairly and without arrogance, record this preference in my behalf as a special mark of distinction conferred upon my services.

I do not believe that in the whole course of my life I ever experienced more ardent excitement, than, when arriving at this camp, I found active preparations to commence this inland movement. I was indeed to ascend those mighty mountains, and to dive into that far-famed continent. All previous enfeeblement seemed at once to forsake me, and I trod the ground, not only with firmness and decision, but with positive elasticity.

As we proceeded from that detested waste, there was not an object that my eye encountered, but ministered to my delight. Never did I more buoyantly discard all transient suffering, nor was I ever more conscious of fortitude to sustain any amount of toil and privation. Thus did the impulse of my mind add energy to physical capacity, and arm me for the forthcoming struggle.

A gradual ascent conducted us to the base of this branch of the Andes, and after toiling up some thousand feet of the usual rugged surface, we reached the first station, occupied by our treacherous ally, Montes, and his band, whence they completely cut off all internal supplies from Cumana. Their defences were of the rudest imaginable order, and nothing but natural impediments, and the astounding rankness of tropical vegetation (for here the mountains were clothed with trees and shrubs to their very summits), could have secured this partizan band in its position.

Here we rested for the night, and cattle were killed, and fresh meat issued to the troops.

This was not an unusual circumstance, but it afforded me the first acquaintance with Indian gluttony. Certain Indians had been allotted to the officers for the transport of their knapsacks, and a fine stout fellow was assigned to me for that purpose.

I may here relate, that our baggage was left behind us in the fleet, and we had taken with us no more than we could pack into knapsacks, and, if needs be, were prepared to carry them on our backs. Still there was a certain amount of consideration towards us in assigning these Indians to our succour.

The cattle, as I have observed, had been killed, and the offal was accessible to any one. My Indian had seized a paunch, surcharged with its offensive contents. This prize, however, he suspended from one of the natural pegs of an adjacent tree, and drawing a huge folding knife, began to scrape and thus to cleanse it, and bit by bit he devoured the whole uncooked paunch. I sat gazing with astonishment at the process, until I beheld him masticate and devour the last morsel. When all had been consumed, he laid himself down and sunk into an apparently undisturbed sleep. In justice to the Indian race, I must say that I never subsequently witnessed a gastronomic feat to this extent.

Ere day-light dawned we marched from this our first mountain height, and very shortly had to descend to a narrow valley below, whence, from a contracted intermediate base, we had again to ascend to an eminence so lofty, that the natives themselves described this mountain as the "Impossible." It must have been many thousand feet in height, and cost us

novices surpassing efforts to ascend. About midway, a somewhat extended flat space inspired the hope that further toil was unnecessary, but a very short inspection of the environs exposed the fallacy of our expectations. However, so numerous were the stragglers, that here the bugle sounded a halt, and for the first time since I had disembarked did I experience the luxury of unmistakeable sleep. I threw myself down upon the first available spot, and for three hours (the period of our halt) became unconscious of the strange scenes around me. When the march was about to be resumed, it was no easy matter to arouse me to a sense of passing events.

Again we struggled and climbed, until the summit of this mighty mountain was attained; and then, what a wondrous spectacle burst upon our sight! Curiosity led us to the highest accessible pinnacle, whence we surveyed Nature in her wildest form. Full well do I remember the emotions that assailed my heart. I literally panted exultingly at the contemplation of that glorious scene. I gazed, and sighed, and almost wept, at the strange and matchless combination of all that was desolate and terrible, but yet sublimely beautiful.

Nothing savouring of human cultivation was discernible, but shattered mountain masses, spiral rocks, and precipitous falls into narrow uncultivable ravines

met the eye on every hand. Such scenery afterwards became familiar to us, but this my first impression of Nature in her wildest majesty can never be forgotten. It awakened within me a fresh enthusiasm, and prepared me for a descent so distressing in its effects, as infinitely to surpass any amount of pain in the most toilsome ascent.

We halted at the inland base of this mountain, at a spot of singular beauty. Crystal waters streamed over rocky beds, and rushed impetuously through numerous channels carved out by nature; while large boulders, which could be reached by a cautious spring from rock to rock, offered romantic resting-places each for a chosen few. On one hand towered aloft the terrible "Impossible," and on the other an extensive ravine clothed with forest trees, the abode of wild beasts, and of countless monkies. These last we both heard and saw in vast numbers. Some, indeed, were of no ordinary delicacy and beauty. Surrounding mountains, more or less distant, defined the region we were traversing, and warned us of forthcoming exertions.

Here we again slaughtered cattle (which, by the way, were easily driven by the tact of the natives over such rugged mountains); and upon these picturesque boulders we lighted fires and broiled our portions. Notwithstanding the fatigue we had en-

dured, we were in good spirits, and jocosely speculated upon the inimitable "tea garden" this spot would make if near London, and upon the crowds that would occupy its banks and boulders on a Sunday.

We next traversed a pathway flanked by a mountain of infinite elevation on our left, and by a steep ravine terminating in a river on our right, which rushed over its rocky bed with furious impetuosity. It was now the rainy season; and, in a moment, the heavens became clouded, and a thunder-storm burst over us with the usual accompaniment.

The deluge of waters rushed down this mighty mountain side into one or two well-wrought channels, and came coursing in a stream of foaming violence into the abyss below. Our march was checked, and we were constrained to wait with patience the abatement of the storm. One of our field officers (Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison) prematurely attempted to pass through the stream that intersected our path; but he was carried headlong with it, and was only saved from destruction by suddenly clinging to an intervening tree, which arrested his apparent fate.

It had been designed that we should reach Cumanacoa, a populous hamlet in the hands of the Independents; but within two miles of that station an intervening river had become so swollen by the rain,

that it was deemed dangerous to attempt its passage, and we passed the night in its swampy precincts. Even the next morning the passage of the river was hazardous; but still we did contrive to cross it without the aid of boats, and arrived at Cumanacoa.

This place had sustained innumerable attacks from the Spaniards, who had occasionally reached it by the Gulf of Cariaco; but two buildings, fortified in the manner described at Barcelona (the largest, indeed, I ever saw in Venezuela), had always proved impregnable, and no efforts of the Royalists could succeed in reducing them.

The soil in this vicinity (an extensive level, bounded on either hand by the mountains and the Gulf of Cariaco) was reputed to produce the very best tobacco in the world. According to the natives, none grown in Cuba could compare with it; and certainly reports from other quarters tended to confirm their estimate of its unrivalled quality. Here we rested an entire day, and were compelled to leave behind us several officers and men, whom privation and fatigue, but principally climate, had disabled. They exceeded 140 in number.

At Cumanacoa we held a general court-martial upon eight prisoners who had deserted from Barcelona, and I acted as judge advocate. They were all found guilty, and were sentenced to death; but

such had been their sufferings in the bush, that, although their lives were spared from summary execution, all, save one, died shortly after, in consequence of the hardships they had so recently endured.

The march of the ensuing day was one of memorable trial. Every valley teemed with turbulent streams, and foaming cascades. All the former had to be traversed; and most were deep and of treacherous footing, owing to large round stones, or rocky indentations. The floundering, immersions, and danger to life were incessant; and these fearful watercourses were found to amount, in one day's march, to twenty-five.

For thirteen days from our outset did we toil through this mountain range, sustained meanwhile by the allowance of one pound of lean beef to each individual, without any kind of addition. In these wilds, and elsewhere of a like uncultivated nature, we could never discover aught eatable but limes, pepper, and guavas; products, by themselves, more mischievous than useful.

We surveyed aspiring rocky peaks covered with snow; watched eagles in their flight, or perching upon spiral fragments; and occasionally passed through miserable villages imbedded in deep and pestilent valleys, dank and sunless, whose occupants bore an impress of characteristic wretchedness.

Once we lighted upon a half-finished church of imposing dimensions; but why built there, or out of what funds, we could not divine. The roof, which was covered in, afforded a fine echo, and enticed a few who were unsubdued by fatigue, to sing a succession of glees and catches; about the only pleasing pastime which these solitary regions had afforded us.

When with mighty efforts we had gained the mountain tops, we occasionally traversed verdant plains, enriched by clear and bountiful springs of water, some wearing the polished appearance of a racecourse. There we would walk erect and enjoy the contrast, only in a few minutes to arrive at the verge of precipices so rugged and seemingly impracticable, that nothing but projecting roots of trees enabled us to maintain an equilibrium, and to descend in safety. For thousands of feet were we slipping, and grasping, and carefully feeling our way, frequently halting to repose for the night in a site so singular, that to sit up and peer over that strange bivouac, with its contiguous grandeur, its smouldering fires, and countless tumuli of human bodies, would constitute a rare scene for the pencil of the painter.

At length we approached the confines of the plains, and noticed with ecstasy the decreasing bulk and altitude of the mountains. When we stood

upon the last elevation, and looked forth upon those boundless savannahs, they wore the aspect of a second garden of Eden, and appeared to teem with the treasures of fertility.

Having really quitted the mountain track, and pushing onwards to the hamlet of Aragua, our course was impeded by the Guarapiche river, filled to overflow by the recent rains. Of greater depth and velocity than any stream we had yet encountered, it caused great terror to those who could not swim; and the danger was enhanced by the contracted nature of the fordable part, and by the high and tangled banks on each hand of the landing-place. Five successive times did I dash across this turbulent river, in order to encourage and direct men in whom I felt an interest. Other officers and soldiers who were able swimmers did the like, and no pains were neglected to insure a safe passage.

Still, notwithstanding all our caution, we lost five men, who, missing their footing, were hurried into eternity down that foaming stream. The big drum, too, proving too weighty for its bearer, followed the same wild course; but at length, by the aid of lassos, the troops had passed over, with the solitary exception of one obstinate and timid wretch, who, despite of commands and menaces, had sat himself down, and refused to stir. Some five or six good

swimmers were sent over with a lasso, and making it fast to his arms, he was dragged by force through the stream.

It was deemed essential to make an example of this stubborn coward. The British Legion was consequently formed into square; and in less than a quarter of an hour, the culprit received a hundred lashes, which a drum-head court-martial had there awarded him.

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CHAP. X.

THE PLAINS. — FEVER, AND LOSS OF SWORD. — MATURIN. — A SAMARITAN. — OUR POSITION. — RUDE STRUCTURES AND A RUDE CAPITAL. — RATS. — HOSPITALS WITHOUT MEDICINES. — NEWS FROM THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT. — ARISMENDI IN POWER. — GENERAL MARIÑO IN COMMAND. — A COMBINED PLAN OF ESCAPE.

We reached Aragua in the afternoon, and the troops, notwithstanding the fatigues of the late appalling march, paraded in soldier-like condition; but by degrees privation wrought its silent effects upon their frames, and within a week the hospital was crowded with our sick.

At our next halting-place on the plains (which, by the way, soon lost their attractions for us, since we at length found them destitute of both edibles and water), many of our men greedily devoured some wild berries, which produced excessive sickness, and even convulsions. Considerable alarm was felt for the fate of many; but happily medical aid proved effective, and they all recovered.

We were now within a short day's march of Maturin, a town on the Guarapiche river, which gloried in the designation of the "Head Quarters of the Department of the East;" and when I arose in the

morning, I experienced febrile symptoms, which made me conscious that I was stricken by fever — the natural result of excessive exertion, and insufficient nourishment. Step by step I travelled onwards, only to be more and more reminded of my inability to endure protracted toil, and I reeled rather than walked along this desert route, sustained simply by the hope of reaching the prescribed resting-place.

We halted on a woodland spot to rest and to refresh the troops, and there I experienced so much prostration, that I could only dose and sigh for prompt relief. When the bugle sounded the march, I arose to something like consciousness, and moved mechanically, without the remotest conception that I had left my sword hanging upon a tree contiguous to our resting-place.

I did not discover my loss till the following morning, when my servant sought for it in vain, and then the full consciousness of the fact flashed into my remembrance. It was restored to me by a soldier who had found the sword thus depending, and unowned.

All I remember of my entrance to Maturin is, that I entered a hut occupied by a kind old man, who conducted me to a hammock, and exhibited a very unusual interest in my comfort. I was too ill to inquire further than my own helplessness required; and, to the honour of humanity be it spoken, I re-

ceived a careful attendance, which attested the universality of civilised devotion to the unfortunate.

This good man, a humble septuagenarian shoemaker, had experienced the extremity of civil conflict; and in his flight and exile had sought a refuge in Trinidad, where he had found a secure asylum. There he had for some years quietly exercised his craft, and had realised all the countenance which his unobtrusive calling had required. He returned to his birthplace, surcharged with sentiments of benevolence natural to him, and fortified by his own especial experience.

The good old fellow perceived my extremity, and exercised in my behalf all the kindliness of the Samaritan. Without the remotest prospect of reward, he watched me with ceaseless solicitude, and left no opportunity unessayed to minister to my comfort.

Here, then, had Providence guided me to the very home suited to my forlorn condition; and in it I lay unmindful of external circumstances, and almost too helpless to move in my narrow crib.

One day the dear old "zapatero" (shoemaker), for so he was called, came to my bed's side with a basin of chicken broth (I had not eaten for many days), and in the kindest accents bade me partake of it. As I feebly rose and thanked him, he rebuked my gratitude in these terms, of course in his native

tongue:—"Say not a word, my friend. I was a fugitive, and was sheltered under the flag of your nation in Trinidad. There I enjoyed security and protection; and surely I ought to do for you what your nation did for me!"

Here, in this humble old man, was a beautiful illustration of Nature's nobility. Poor old fellow! he has long since been gathered to his fathers; but in his account hereafter he would have it to say,—"He was sick, and I visited him!"

But let me now record the singular position in which we were here located. The preceding narrative will have indicated our distance from that terrible mountain range, which with so much toil we had surmounted. Maturin was built (if such a term can be ascribed to such a town) upon a flat surface, rising gently to the usual level of the plain, from an arm of the Guarapiche river. It occupied a very extended space, and was the capital of a vast inland district. Some few houses were constructed of walls formed by the use of rough wooden frames, in which materials consisting of mud with some composite admixture were rudely beaten into consistency. These, however, were the exceptions; for the structures in general were formed simply of stout stakes, interwoven with rank dried leaves gathered from the wilderness, and roofed with the

like materials. The interior was utterly devoid of either embellishment or convenience, while blocks of wood served as seats and tables, calabashes as dishes, and the rudest earthen crockery as cooking utensils. A chair, or knife and fork, or spoon, were not procurable; nor in this "capital" could a sheet of paper, or a single pen, be purchased.

Such was Maturin, "the Head Quarters of the Department of the East." Behind it was the open plain, whence the distant view of those dreadful mountains caused me a frequent shudder; but within a few miles, still on the banks of the river, were plantations which supplied the whole vicinage with fruit and vegetables. When somewhat recovered, I visited one of these plantations, where I observed numerous swivels mounted upon traversing carriages, and learned that they were nightly loaded, and the grounds guarded by watchers, to scare away the troops of monkeys, which otherwise would have laid waste all cultivation.

Sometimes I would stray down to the river, approachable by a narrow but thick jungle, and there sit and gaze upon the turbid stream, for such it really was.

One day, on my return from such a casual walk, the good old shoemaker asked me where I had been. I answered, "To the river." "Alone?" he in-

quired. "Yes, alone," I replied. With the most serious countenance, the old man ejaculated, "Never again do go there alone, or one day you will never return!" He then proceeded to inform me that the woods abounded with tigers, and that it was most perilous for a single individual to enter them. He, moreover, informed me, that of nights those ferocious animals would stalk into the town itself, to seek for prey. I need hardly say how willingly I forbore my visits to the river, or how cautiously I looked around me, if ever I threaded the town at a late hour of the night.

At a period of total inactivity and in a place destitute of aught to instruct or even occupy the mind, feuds and differences frequently arose to embitter the intercourse of the officers. In accordance with the prevailing custom of the times, a trifling altercation or a hasty word would be deemed to constitute an "insult," and a resort to "satisfaction" was frequently threatened, and sometimes adopted; and in one case the conflict terminated fatally.

A trifling quarrel between Major Davy (late an officer of the British Army) and Assistant Surgeon Gray, led to a hostile meeting; but before it came off, Gray called casually upon me, and disclosed the intended rencounter. He asked my advice as to the prudence of his confronting his antagonist in the cos-

tume he then wore, viz. his regimental jacket and white trowsers; or whether he should doff the former, and put on a white jacket also. I suggested the latter course; but expressed a hope that an arrangement might obviate the last extremity, and thus he left me. In the short space of half an hour, I learned the melancholy fact, that poor Gray had been shot through the heart and fell dead before his rival. To the honour of Davy be it spoken (notwithstanding the rashness of the original proceeding), I never saw a smile upon his countenance during my after stay with the regiment.

I cannot affirm that at Maturin we enjoyed tranquillity, for our rest was nightly disturbed by a colony of rats so multitudinous as to defy computation. The materials of the buildings constituted a retreat for these vermin; and in the walls and roofs of those frail mansions they reposed quietly through the day, only to prepare themselves for the most extravagant gambols throughout the night. They were innumerable, and at close of day would begin to squeak and wriggle amongst the thatch, until at length the irruption was astounding. How they all subsisted, or why the natives tolerated so crying a nuisance, became matters of conjecture.

On reflection, however, we behold, in these and

other animals of unclean voracity, Nature's well-designed conservatism. Where no drains existed, and where every species of refuse was rudely cast forth, in a climate, too, favouring rapid decomposition calculated to poison the atmosphere, the rats and the vulture tribe became the agents of an inscrutable board of health, and performed the functions of sanitary guardians of the public weal.

At Maturin rude hospitals had been formed, and were shortly surcharged with our sick, who lay abject and smitten incurably, because no medical appliance of any, even the simplest, kind had been provided for such a contingency. There lay a host of wretched beings, without bedding, adequate sustentation, or medical resources. Numbers were afflicted by irritating blains called by the natives "malditas" which assailed principally the joints, and with a cancerous progress extended with every hour's neglect. The spectacle which this hospital exhibited, was really heart-rending; and yet, not a single effort to allay the torments of these poor creatures was even thought of by their commander.

Meantime this station had been attained; but why so hurriedly, and at such a cost of valuable lives, could only be solved by the thoughtless and indolent character of the native chiefs. Of these there were

two classes: the one brave to a fault and indomitable in their native fastnesses, but without an idea beyond them; the other more refined in their external bearing, but utterly devoid of energy, and destitute of the redeeming quality of their hardier brethren.

I know not any principle that could be supposed to guide the latter, unless slothful inaptitude should be numbered amongst the requisites for a liberating cause. Unhappily, we had to do with a chief of that indolent school (the very opposite to Napoleon's fiery generals), and his achievements were in the exact ratio of his qualities.

At Maturin we received astounding information. Arismendi, the outcast from Margarita, who had been sent to Angostura to be there impeached, and brought to trial, had arrived at the seat of government at the moment that the sages there assembled had learned Bolivar's departure for the conquest of New Grenada. As the supreme chief had undertaken a march over extensive plains intersected by formidable rivers, and would have to encounter an active enemy fortified by mountainous defences, his absence was deemed positive, and his return problematical. Here, then, was opened a wide field for those petty intriguers who revel in dangerless casualties. Bolivar had intrusted the government of the republic to Zea, the Vice-President; a studious and

respectable man, who was doubtless well-affected to the genuine cause of his country.

Arismendi, however, opportunely arrived to co-operate with a faction; and instead of a trial and punishment for his insubordination at Margarita, he was elevated to the post of Vice-President of the republic, from which Zea was expelled.

Here, then, was the man whom Bolivar most distrusted, armed in his absence with supreme power; and General Mariño, an unwearied factionist, was appointed to supersede Urdaneta and to command the army of the East. All kinds of operations were reported to be in contemplation; and suddenly the new commander arrived at Maturin, and the troops were excited by fresh hopes, kindled by a new administration of affairs.

While these events resulted from the political struggles at Angostura, the British Legion was daily diminishing in numerical strength, and exhausting its little remaining devotion. I and others were contemplating even the means of escape. We had tendered our resignations to General Urdaneta; but so numerous were the applicants for the distinction of retirement, that the enraged chief threatened volunteers of this class with imprisonment in the fortress of Old Guyana. I had been so decided in the use of terms to express my abhorrence and disgust, that my

language was reported to the general, and, in consequence, I was summoned into the presence of the chief of the staff, Colonel Montilla, and severely reproved for my freedom of speech.

When those unhappy captives had been slaughtered in the precincts of Cuenana, many of us had agreed to make common cause, and conjointly to abandon this unrighteous service. We had from time to time conferred upon the means to effect our purpose; and at length, when voluntary resignation had been threatened with penal visitation, we began to devise schemes for desertion. Major Carver (formerly of the 9th Regiment), Dr. Murphy (one of our regimental surgeons), Lieut. Leave, and myself, met frequently to discuss the details of this project.

We had surveyed the river's banks, and discovered a large boat belonging to the plantation of which I have already spoken, and had half determined to seize it at night and run down with the stream of the Guarapiche into the Gulf of Paria, and thus attempt to reach Trinidad. On inquiry, we found the stream to be of tortuous and difficult navigation; and a young Canadian trader, with whom we had formed an acquaintance and had intrusted with our scheme, dissuaded us from attempting it.

He, however, volunteered to furnish us with disguises, and to take us in his own boat. Upon this

stratagem we were hopefully relying, when our new ally was seized with fever, and our expectations of escape were thus annihilated. Meanwhile, the hospitals became more and more crowded, and consternation darkened every countenance.

CHAP. XI.

DEATH OF GENERAL ENGLISH. — INTRODUCTION TO MARIÑO. — LEAVE TO GO TO ANGOSTURA. — DEPARTURE FROM MATURIN. — THE WILDERNESS. — ANIMAL LIFE, AND NATURAL DIFFICULTIES. — THE ORINOCO. — BARANCAS. — THE BRITISH FLAG. — NATIONAL ENTHUSIASM, AND ITS POETIC RESULT.

At this epoch a courier brought the periodical letters and despatches; and amongst other intelligence we learned the arrival, at Margarita, of General Devereux's Legion, the dearth of provisions in that island almost amounting to famine, the consequent prevalence of sickness and fever, and, amongst other casualties, the death of General English. After the failure of the attack upon Cumana, that man had abandoned the British Legion, and had retired to Margarita, where he lingered with the hope of receiving from the republican government the reward of his treachery to us. It was well for him that he had not accompanied us through our mountain march; for so infuriated had the men become against him, that he would probably have been sacrificed to their rage.

I was slumbering in my hammock, when I was suddenly startled by vociferous cheers, repeated again

and again; and running to ascertain the cause, I found that the news of the death of English had spread like wildfire; and, on hearing it, the men had simultaneously rushed out, and one universal burst of triumph proclaimed their savage joy.

General Mariño, the newly appointed chief, arrived at Maturin with his staff, and his appearance and deportment contrasted favourably with the cold reserve of his predecessor. Mariño visited the hospitals; and when he saw the sufferings around him, he wept aloud. Such a trait, in our circumstances, endeared the man, and he became at once popular. He wrote instantly for a proper supply of medicines; and, I believe, felt all the reproach attachable to a government that surrendered its followers to so cruel an extremity.

All the officers paid their personal respects to the newly invested chief, and I had the good fortune to be one of the earliest. Nothing could be more courteous and urbane than his reception; and I beheld in him a man of the European school. He was a stout fair-haired man, of winning countenance and gentle manners, and his address and conversation stole imperceptibly upon all who approached him.

I ventured to express my desire to secede from the service, and to return to my own country; and without a moment's hesitation, he signified his as-

sent, and furnished me with the requisite authority to go to Angostura, there to present my resignation to the government. The opportune entry of Colonel Sucré, a native officer charged with despatches to Angostura, afforded me an introduction to that functionary; and, then and there, it was arranged that on the following afternoon I should accompany Sucré on his way to the seat of government on the Orinoco.

Having taken leave of General Mariño, I was thenceforth in communication with the colonel, and making prompt arrangements, the following afternoon, viz. the 25th September, 1819, saw me on my way from this head quarter of tigers, rats, and semi-savage life, towards a distant point—to me a land of imaginary promise.

The news of my intended departure found wings, and the whole Legion became cognisant of it. Many of the men came to implore my exposition in England, of the deception practised upon them, and appeared to derive comfort in the assurance that I would unfold the history of their wrongs.

On the afternoon of my departure our route lay by their quarters, and my heart was touched by the spontaneous muster and hearty farewell of those unhappy men. As I passed the wretched group, I could with difficulty repress my tears at their earnest

ejaculations for my welfare. Poor fellows, how few of them outlived that terrible service!

Colonel Sucré was mounted on a good mule, and I bestrode another, his property, scarcely inferior. We took with us in addition two sumpter mules, guided by two Samboes, or native Llañeros; and as soon as I had overcome the emotion which the touching adieus of the men had awakened, I began to look around me with speculative interest.

In the course of our journey we encountered the incidental obstructions and trials of waste and wilderness: at one time crossing rickety bridges, formed of interwoven leathern thongs fastened from bank to bank, and looking down fearful depths upon streams of varied acceleration; occasionally encountering tribes of Indians, unconscious of a lack of clothing, but ever, if kindly greeted, responding with genuine confidence and good humour to the salutation of strangers, and yielding them friendly service; toiling across parched and barren plains, where occasionally for hours nought would be discernible but sky and withered grass. A cloud-like speck would appear on the horizon, and by gradual degrees unfold the distant forest, the sure precursor of some adjacent river. Streams of doubtful depth and velocity must be crossed, and most generally without any artificial aid. The disburthened mules would swim

across, and landing on the opposite bank would quietly browse, and await the coming of their masters. I was particularly struck by the numbers and the size of birds, winging their flight and perching upon widely scattered trees. The small lakes we encountered were invariably adorned by beautiful flamingoes, which desisted timidly on our approach from their search after fish, while their bright and variegated plumage fully justified the native designation of "soldados," or soldier birds. The parrots and paroquets were so numerous, that they quite exceeded the commonest birds in European countries. The swiftness of their flight, and the quiet tenacity with which they moved amongst the branches of trees, impressed us with their wild natural qualities on the one hand, and their characteristic sluggishness when perching or encaged.

Occasionally we would journey through rank grass, and there disturb herds of wild deer, whose elastic bounds both startled and amused us. In dense jungle we heard fearful cries from beasts of prey, and at rare intervals discerned a stray tiger. The mules instinctively exhibited extreme alarm at their vicinity; and Colonel Sucré, who had traversed the length and breadth of savage districts, divined by the excitement of our animals their contiguity to their natural foes.

One afternoon we pursued the beaten track and were rounding a thick wood, when the sudden agitation of our mules forewarned us of some unusual presence. "Tigre!" exclaimed one of our Samboes; and within a dozen paces of us stood an immense tiger, whose eyes appeared to survey me with earnest ferocity. Happily he was gorged to the full, and, sluggishly turning round, stalked into the jungle, and with quiet step dived into its recesses. We were well-satisfied to be rid of his company, and resumed our route without the least desire to intercept him.

Amongst other incidents, we one day discerned at a distance rapidly approaching flames, and found the plains before us to be on fire. This, I was informed, was no unusual occurrence. Careless travellers would ignite the dried grass; and in that event, if a breeze prevailed, miles of this withered herbage would shortly be consumed, and the fiery devastation progress without probable limit. My companion directed my course, and at his bidding we spurred our mules, and dashed through a merely superficial conflagration; for, owing to the eternal heat and parched nature of the soil, the grass was dry and scant.

In short, all kinds of comfortless obstructions intervened; but nevertheless I was greatly interested by

the natural phenomena of these tropical wilds. I have no hesitation in saying that the crowning danger of such journeys is the passage of deep and rapid rivers, unaided by boats or bridges. They swarm with alligators, electric eels, and a small flat fish called the "caribe." This latter has a circular mouth, no larger than a sixpence, beset with the sharpest teeth. His dart is unerring, and the excision complete; the bite, moreover, is always succeeded by severe irritation, and is with difficulty healed.

On one day of our march, after travelling for hours we arrived at the banks of the Morescao Largo, a river wide, deep, and of the clearest water. Here we found an old Sambo, who occupied a cottage and garden on its banks, and, moreover, owned a boat used to transport travellers across the river, from which aid he derived a trifling revenue. So numerous were the mosquitoes and other tormentors, that the natives most appropriately named this spot "La Madre de la Plaga."

While all were busily employed in disburthening the mules and consigning their loads to the boat, I was looking wistfully at the delicious stream, and suddenly determined to plunge in and swim across; and without further hesitation I stripped, and putting my clothes unobserved amidst the general occu-

pation, into the boat, I gently breasted the water, and was soon on the opposite bank. The boat followed quickly after; and no sooner did its owner see me, and learn the fact of my having swam the river, than he invoked the Almighty, and set up a cry of such wild deprecation of my temerity, that I perceived I had incurred unusual danger. "How could you be so imprudent? Why did you not speak to me? Do you not know that this river swarms with enormous alligators?" It is, indeed, a wonder that you got over alive!" All this time the old boatman's face betokened so much horror, that I became fully impressed with my most providential escape from a frightful death. Often am I borne back by memory to the Morescao Largo, and as often do I tremble at the peril of its passage. However, I reaped future caution from this adventure.

We passed the Indian settlement of Tobasko, where we received the hospitality of a patriot colonel, whose skin was darker than ebony, but whose deportment was dignified and courteous; and on the following day we reached the banks of the Coa.

That river was too wide to be passed without a boat, and we were ferried over by an aged Indian. In the Coa I first saw the chiguire, or river hog; an amphibious animal which abounds in the waters of the Apure, and feeding exclusively upon the

vegetable products of freshwater streams, is esteemed by the natives nutritious food. Five of those animals allowed me to approach within a few yards of them, and then dived and disappeared. To my eye they rather resembled the sheep than the hog, and were of that size.

Continuing our route across these plains, we reached the Orinoco river, at the hamlet of Barancas, the first station from the mouth occupied by a trading community. It was evening as we approached this mighty stream; and the moon being up and tinging its surface with brightness, I saw at once there were good grounds for the exultation with which the natives described its magnificence.

Barancas was of inconsiderable extent; but its inhabitants having frequent intercourse with traders from Trinidad, possessed comfortable furniture, and domestic appliances to which my eye had long been a stranger. There we passed the night, and the following day quitted our mules, and embarked on board a Venezuelan schooner, bound for Angostura, which had alternately to sail and warp-up against an opposing current; and by this tedious process, after many days, reached its destination.

In our journey across the plains, we had been attended by two Samboes, or native Llañeros, whose untiring activity caused me great surprise. They

drove our sumpter mules, walked the whole distance, disburthened the animals, swam the rivers with loads upon their heads, and at the halting-hour would seek for fuel, and light fires, and cook, without the remotest symptom of fatigue. Such are the fruits of daily habitual toil.

At Barancas I experienced the full import of national enthusiasm, and my heart gave vent to all its pent-up emotions of patriotism. My first idea, on rising in the morning, was to see by broad daylight the river of which I had heard such magniloquent reports, and consequently I lost no time in seeking its banks, and there I beheld that glorious *fleuve* coursing with quiet celerity to the ocean. The extent, the current, and the circumjacent forest, together with the distant mountains dimly seen, impressed me by the *tout ensemble* of their wild imagery. Two small schooners lay at anchor in a sort of quiet bay, which had marked Barancas for a first *entrepôt* for trading purposes.

The sun streamed its full flood of lustre on the scene, when I beheld the British flag suddenly run up, and floating from the gaff of one of these schooners, thus attesting the nation of that tiny craft. My heart beat tumultuously, and an ecstasy of delight and pride thrilled through my frame. I gazed, and wept, nay, almost sobbed, at the sight of that cherished

ensign. All other objects became to me indistinct and indifferent, and I sat me down, and sunk into a reverie at once pleasing and painful. My own dear country, from which I appeared to have been so long estranged, seemed to break upon my vision by some magical operation, and I invoked every term that tended to denote my exhaustless fealty, and devotion to it.

In the plenitude of my excitement I took out my pencil, and, absorbed by one engrossing sentiment, I composed the following stanzas. At least twenty-five years ago they first appeared in print in a periodical of that day, with a prefix of the circumstances which gave rise to their composition, and they have since found their way into other periodicals. I give them here as an ebullition of undoubted sincerity.

ST. GEORGE'S CROSS.—THE METEOR FLAG OF ENGLAND.

Hail beauteous type of majesty, that proudly braves the breeze!
Thou regal banner! float aloft through all discover'd seas.
As silver-crested surges rise to hail thy glorious way,
So swell the spirits of the brave who contemplate thy sway.
For boundless realms must quail beneath portentous signs of loss,
Whene'er with hostile purpose floats St. George's gallant Cross.

Blest streamer of my native land! with what ecstatic pride
I see thy soaring emblems high surmount this rushing tide.
For, oh! beneath the baneful shade of alien banners led,
My drooping heart, my unnerved arm, confess their prowess fled.
My dull and heavy eye, which scenes of woe alone engross,
Still kindles at thy magic charm, my mighty country's Cross.

From thy ascendant rule afar, here Nature wildly reigns,
While sanguined streams of battle rise and deluge trackless plains.
I've seen the motley cohorts train'd where star-deck'd banners flew,
And coldly view'd the standard wave that urged the sable crew.
For all their country's richest gems could ne'er their stars emboss,
With half thy lustrous wreaths of fame, my hallow'd country's Cross.

The foemen of Iberia's tower its bases undermine!
Fell treason sear'd the Drapeau Blanc, and bade its lilies pine.
Beyond the bounds for mortal flight would Gallia's eagle soar;
His stricken pinions droop'd, and lo! his aërial course was o'er.
'Mid these convulsions, firm and free, thy trophies still engross
The changeless homage of the world, my hallow'd country's Cross.

While yonder broad and glowing disc illumines these cloudless skies,
May moral splendour gild the land o'er which thy pendant flies!
May Peace and Hope concurrent throw their genial mantles o'er,
And Freedom's bristling panoply warn despots from her shore!
And fired by undivided love, on high may Britons toss
Their joyful hands, and shout acclaim, "God save St. George's Cross!"

CHAP. XII.

EMBARKED ON THE ORINOCO.—A TREE BEARING STRANGE FRUIT.—THE TOWN OF GUYANA.—ANGOSTURA.—INTERDICTION TO QUIT THE COUNTRY.—UNUSUAL HOSPITALITY.—SEIZED WITH YELLOW FEVER.—A MEDICAL SAMARITAN.—RECOVERY.—POSSESSION OF A PASSPORT.—ARRIVAL OF BOLIVAR—HIS RECEPTION.—DISMISSAL OF ARISMENDI.—ENTERTAINMENT TO BOLIVAR.—A CHALLENGE, AND A DILEMMA.—AN EXPEDITION.—APPOINTMENT TO THE STAFF, AND PROMOTION.—THE HONOUR DECLINED.—A PASSAGE SECURED.

For official purposes Colonel Sucré had brought me by a circuitous route, and thus I had the advantage to traverse an extended range of country. However, we embarked at Barancas in a neat schooner, and found on board two young married women of respectable condition, and other persons, whose lively conversation beguiled this otherwise tedious passage.

In ascending the river, the dangers to its navigation were numerous; it was consequently the custom to seek out at evening a secure spot, and there make fast the vessel for the night, most generally by passing hawsers round some gigantic tree.

Such was the case on our first day's embarkation; and as the cabin was intolerable, owing to the flights of mosquitoes which infested it (and those of the

Orinoco are unusually famed for the length of their fangs, and the venom of their sting), I determined to pass the night on deck, and for my couch selected a hen-coop. I needed no covering, merely putting a handkerchief over my face, and thrusting my hands into my pockets to shield them from our restless tormentors. My bed, none of the softest, did not encourage prolonged sleep, and I awoke very early in the morning.

As day faintly began to dawn, my attention was attracted to the tree to which our craft was made fast, and the more I watched it, the more it appeared to me, to be loaded with fruit of a red colour. My curiosity became intensely excited, and I continued to gaze with increased surprise at the size of the fruit with which the tree appeared to be surcharged, when of a sudden the problem was solved, for a large flight of red macaws took wing and quickly disappeared.

God knows at what hour of the evening they had sought that roosting-place, but there they had passed the night, to puzzle me by vain surmises at early morn. Of course, such an incident was not devoid of interest. It, like every thing else I had seen, differed so essentially from facts and features observable in Europe, that the strangeness and originality possessed a more than passing charm for the traveller.

We touched at Old Guyana, where a capricious bend of the channel compelled every vessel designing to pass, to sail within easy reach of the guns of a fort which, commanding the passage, afforded adequate protection to the navigation of the river for all the purposes of the republic, and was equal to repel an invading squadron. The town was precisely of the rat-harbouring character with that of Maturin. The yellow fever raged extensively throughout this portion of Guyana, and the cadaverous beings who stalked abroad, attested its malign influence.

I looked with unusual interest upon this fortress, because we had been threatened at Maturin with its duresse, and there Colonel Wilson, an English officer who had offended the authorities, had been long confined a prisoner.

On our passage upwards some circumstances necessitated temporary repose, and the vessel was made fast, as usual, to the bank. During the interval of rest, a shooting excursion was proposed and adopted, and some half dozen of us were armed with muskets from the schooner for that purpose. We landed upon the usual tangled ground that skirts a tropical river, and, for better sport, agreed to separate and individually to seek for it. Ere long I found my course completely obstructed by the rank prevalence of shrubs and brambles, and under a scorching sun I

toiled and struggled only to become more fearfully entangled. I appeared to be in the very hot-bed of snakes and alligators, and at length became stricken with alarm, and determined to beat a retreat. I found this no easy task; but at length, after being seriously scorched and torn, I did succeed in regaining the water's side, where I was soon joined by my brother sportsmen, all of whom had experienced the like obstacles. We were glad to return on board, not much enamoured with, or inclined to renew a shooting excursion on, the banks of the Orinoco.

We duly reached Angostura, and I was not a little struck with the river frontage of this neat, but secluded town. A handsome line of white residences constituted a terrace of inviting pretensions; such, indeed, as would not have discredited a favoured English watering-place. Most of the houses possessed balconies opening from the principal saloon by folding casements, and some were shaded by verandas. A neat foot-pavement, and a spacious carriage-road divided the houses from the river, which was here broad, of scarcely fathomable depth, and rapid in its course. The city contained a small plaza, with a good church, and the hall of Congress, together with some government offices. The town could boast of a hospital; and, although not extensive, was throughout of picturesque appearance.

The surrounding country had its attractions; but was partially and imperfectly cultivated, owing to the uncertain tenure of its occupants, and the free use made by the government, without payment, of any part of the produce, for casual public purposes. The population was then estimated at 6000 souls, of all colours, and extraction. Across the river, immediately opposite to Angostura, was a hamlet called Solidad, to which many of the inhabitants of the city resorted as to country residences. The cottages were, however, of the rudest description, and the vicinity flat and sterile. Yet the half-hourly passage of a ferry-boat to Solidad, announced by blowing the conch, was in general the only thing indicative of life and movement.

On landing, I waited upon General Arismendi, whom I found, as I have previously described, Vice-President of the state. He recognised me as one of his late supervisors at Margarita, extended his hand, and was quite affable until I disclosed my desire to quit the service, and to return to England. Then, indeed, his countenance became clouded, and he extinguished my hopes by a stern refusal. Arismendi condescended to inform me that I must "no longer consider myself as English, but Venezuelan," and that I must prepare to join in the conquest of Caraccas.

My next step was to present letters of introduction from Colonels Stopford and Woodberry, to Mr. Hamilton, then the most influential and respected British merchant in the Patriot territory. He occupied one of the best houses in front of the river, and lived in a style of elegance quite new to my experience in those regions. He kindly offered me a room in his house and a seat at his table, and by this unlooked-for hospitality I was suddenly transferred to the luxury of generous diet, with no stint of excellent Madeira wine, all tending to give a comforting impulse to my spirits.

Alas! I was not long destined to enjoy this change of condition. Bolivar had succeeded in his expedition against New Granada, and had captured Santa Fé de Bogota, where he possesssed himself of the enemy's treasure in that capital.

Within a few days of my arrival at Angostura, there arrived a special messenger from that chief, bearing money to be expended in the purchase of arms at some British colony, and Mr. Hamilton (securely trusted by Bolivar) was urgently requested to execute that delicate mission. He consequently quitted Angostura, and I was again consigned to my own resources.

There resided in this remote city a medical man named Kirby, a civilian, who practised amongst the

foreign merchants, and the crews of foreign vessels. He had gained some celebrity by the treatment of ague, a prevalent disorder, and was enabled to live in superior style, to the envy and disgust of the military surgeons. He was married, and with his wife, a native of Cambridgeshire, inhabited a spacious house contiguous to the river, where they kept riding mules, and had a plentiful stock of poultry and other substantial comforts.

Providentially I formed an acquaintance with that gentleman, a circumstance to which, under Heaven, I owed the preservation of my life. He was hospitable, and deemed it necessary occasionally to launch out into a costly entertainment, and just about that period Colonel Stopford (who had recently arrived from Maturin) and myself joined a numerous circle of Dr. Kirby's friends, at a supper of more than ordinary pretensions. Thence it was (as I conceive) that his regard for me warmed into friendship.

I was residing with two British officers on leave from the army of the Apure, when I was suddenly seized with the yellow fever. I had ere then been greatly reduced by dysentery, and my frame was exhibiting in various ways the inroads wrought by recent fatigues and privation.

When, however, I was assailed by that fearful scourge the marsh or yellow fever, my consignment

to the native hospital seemed to be the last alternative, and my companions had made arrangements (the only step in their power) for my removal to that place of reputed neglect and misery, on the following morning.

Happily for me Dr. Kirby learned my condition, and without a moment's delay he hired two black labourers, and taking with him a capacious hammock, hastened to my quarters and had me carried instanter to his own residence, where his unwearied skill and attention hardly availed to save my life. Indeed, at one moment he prepared his wife for my death, and assigned me five minutes to live.

By the blessing of Providence I survived, but it was long before I could stand or walk. In the progress of my convalescence I dwelt day and night upon England, and as soon as I could crawl I crept to the house of the Vice-President, where my spectral appearance so softened or alarmed Arismendi, that with almost impatient despatch he handed me a passport, to enable me to quit that country and service.

The possession of that blessed authority lent vigour to my mind, and my daily improvement in health became marvellous. I was making anxious inquiries for some vessel bound to an English colony (where, by the way, my prospect must have been of dire uncertainty), when, one morning early, the city was electrified by the arrival of an *avant courier*, bearing

the intelligence that Bolivar would be at Angostura within a few hours.

The excitement was prodigious, and the consternation of Arismendi and his satellites proportionate. The celerity of the Supreme Chief's movements took them by surprise. No one imagined that he could yet have reached the Apure. Bolivar was, however, a man of indomitable activity; and in this instance, his disquietude at the successful maneuvres of Arismendi and Mariño had lent wings to his accustomed speed, and he outstripped all anticipation.

Cannon were quickly run down to the point of landing, every vessel in the river hoisted its brightest flags, the men hastened to attire themselves in their gayest costume, ladies thronged the windows and balconies, and before noon the Supreme Chief stepped from his boat amidst an enthusiastic burst of welcome.

I was particularly anxious to watch the deportment of Arismendi, and was near enough to mark his hypocritical reception of Bolivar. He advanced in full dress, tendered the embrace so common in Southern countries, and pressed his head with well-feigned devotion against the shoulder of the Chief, upon whom he smiled with arch-dissimulation.

All this mockery, however, was of short duration. Bolivar that very day repaired to the Congress, ad-

dressed an obsequious, and now confiding body, and Arismendi's temporary authority soon ceased to exist.

It was really instructive to scan the features of that fallen chief. Every bad passion traced its reflection in his countenance. He was, however, too treacherous and wily to enlist the sympathy of any one person, and his overthrow produced universal satisfaction. Before dismissing his name from my narrative let me in justice avow, that had the British Legion been led from Margarita by a man of Arismendi's well-known courage and daring, the consequences to the republican cause would in all probability have been important.

The following day the President held a *levée*, which was crowded. I accompanied Colonel Stopford to it, and we certainly left the saloon with an unfavourable impression of the Chief's demeanour and address. Indeed, so great was the colonel's disappointment that, as we went out he exclaimed, "Is this the great Bolivar?"

The British and American merchants met, and discussed the details of a dinner to be given to Bolivar, with a ball in the evening to the ladies of Angostura. The proposition was hailed with acclamation, and the only subject of contention was the guests to be invited. When Dr. Kirby's name was mentioned, up rose a Dr. Roberton and de-

nounced it. The proposal to invite me passed without a single dissentient; but professional jealousy succeeded in excluding Kirby, who, resenting the aspersions cast upon his character, resolved to send a hostile message to his medical detractor, and I was the bearer of the challenge. A refusal to meet Kirby was supported by a series of forced reasoning, founded upon some idle rumours; but a willingness to meet me as his friend was savingly pronounced.

To that extraordinary course I naturally demurred; and as a notion prevailed in some quarters that I was bound by the laws of duelling to maintain, at the risk of my life, the honour of my friend, I solicited the advice of two field officers (late of British cavalry regiments), and they decided that no such obligation attached to me. Kirby, they ruled, had amply vindicated his own character, and his opponent should be left to justify his equivocal conduct. Their decision proved final, and I was relieved from a perilous dilemma.

The Supreme Chief accepted the invitation of the merchants, and a sumptuous banquet was provided. The entertainment throughout was of the true British character; toasts were proposed, speeches delivered, and songs intervened. I was importuned to sing the Legion Anthem; and those who were ignorant of the English language (Bolivar amongst

the number) applauded, because they were informed that the sentiment was eulogistic of their cause and country.

When "the toast of the evening" was proposed from the chair, the plaudits became long and loud; and in the plenitude of enthusiasm, up sprung three or four Venezuelan patriots, and seizing Bolivar, they bore him on a seat of entwining hands around the board, amidst vociferous *vivas*. When he was again deposited in his place at the table, he returned thanks in earnest and eloquent terms, and lavished unbounded thanks upon his foreign friends.

The tables were in due time removed, and the room prepared for the ball. Good music had been provided, and the ladies, numerous and tastefully attired, showed the universal zest for dancing. The *fête* was altogether well ordered and successful, and Bolivar was the partner whom all covetted. He was gay and indefatigable; and as his name and deeds had extended through the world, he was watched by eyes of wondering admiration, and was pronounced to be an elegant dancer; and so indeed he was.

My enfeebled frame was inadequate to sustain excitement, and the consequence was a severe attack of ague. My suffering and prostration were extreme, and I became a living skeleton. I despaired of seeing

my native country again, especially as I had looked about in vain for a vessel to bear me to the colonies.

At this time an expedition had been planned by Bolivar against Santa Martha on the coast, and General Montilla (late the chief of the staff under General Urdaneta) was appointed to the command. He was ordered to sail to Margarita, there to embark the remnant of General Devereux's Legion, principally enlisted in Ireland, and to pursue a line of operations upon which he was instructed.

What was my astonishment when one day, during a walk in quest of air and exercise, I was accosted by a full-bearded Venezuelan soldier, who presented me with an orderly-book, in which my name was inscribed as one of the staff of General Montilla, to accompany the designed expedition.

In a state of alarm I waited on Bolivar, and implored his forbearance. I produced my passport from General Arismendi, pleaded my shattered health, and prayed that I might be allowed to quit the service. He was manifestly displeased at my importunity; but signified, in ungracious terms, that the choice rested with myself. My election was pronounced without a moment's wavering, and he haughtily replied, "Well, Sir, you may go to England."

I met Montilla that very day, and explained to him my utter inability to endure the campaigns of

such a country. He urged me to reconsider my determination, spoke favourably of the climate to which he was bound, and frankly avowed that my knowledge of the Spanish language made him anxious to secure my services. He, moreover, informed me that he was authorised by Bolivar, to offer me the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on the Staff, and promised that my name should appear in to-morrow's orders with that recognised advancement. It did so appear; but having become impressed with the doom which threatened any further toil in those regions, I resisted the lure, and persisted in quitting the country.

I announced my final decision to Bolivar, who on that occasion was more gentle and considerate, and presented me with an order on the treasury for forty dollars, which was duly honoured. All this time I had resided with my good friends the Kirbys, and failed not to consult them throughout these perplexing occurrences.

Colonel Stopford had been despatched from Maturin to Angostura, in order to extort, by argument and protest, some recognition from the government of the claims of their British supporters, and to endeavour to insure for them more encouraging treatment. I aided him by the translation of papers, and by occasional *vivâ voce* interpretations. Without entering into needless details, it may merely be ob-

served, that equivocation and indifference to our representations stamped the conduct of the government functionaries of that day, and no satisfactory settlement was to my knowledge effected.

I also acted as interpreter with General Bolivar for my friend Dr. Kirby, who was in treaty for a high medical appointment; and such were the principles enunciated that, had they been frankly promulgated in Europe, not a man would have been so besotted as to espouse a cause divested of every inducement.

In their public speeches we were extravagantly lauded by the Patriot leaders, while the thanks of Congress were voted to us for the campaigns of Barcelona and Cumana, and we were honoured with the designation of "Libertadores." As no medallion or decoration accompanied the distinction, it was received with cold indifference.

At Angostura I became intimate with a Captain Vowel of the Columbian army; an Englishman of amiable but thoughtless disposition, whose strange career has been rarely paralleled.

He was an under-graduate of one of the universities, at the moment when the death of a relative put into his own possession 2000*l.* Absolute master of that sum, he relinquished his studies, quitted the university, and, infected by a prevailing mania, re-

solved to bear arms for the emancipation of Venezuela. After expending 200*l.* in an outfit, he embarked with the possession of 1800*l.*

Such a capital in such a region would have constituted him a wealthy man; but alas! Vowel was improvident and indiscriminately generous, and consequently lent so much to certain casual friends, and absolutely gave so much to others, that, when I met him in Angostura (after only two years of service in South America), he had been despoiled of all his gold, and possessed only his own good sword to fight his way once more to fortune; if, in such a country, there could be found a road leading to that goal.

That Vowel was a man of robust frame may be inferred from the ensuing remarkable portion of his history:—While operating with a body of natives on the plains of the Apure, the party was one evening seated after a fatiguing march, in a natural hollow having, as he described it, the appearance of a gravel pit, and forming a cul de sac. They were quietly regaling themselves, when a large body of Spanish cavalry suddenly rushed in upon them, and speedily, to all appearance, sabred every soul.

Vowel alone remained unscathed. A hasty presence of mind tended to preserve his life. He lay outstretched and motionless, and simulated the

rigidity of death; and the Spaniards, having despatched all in whom any remaining life was discernible, deceived by that artifice, left him unhurt. He lay amongst his slaughtered companions afraid to move a muscle, until the darkness of evening gave him courage to raise his head, when he perceived the mangled corpses of his late comrades, and found that he was the sole survivor.

Creeping from that scene of carnage, he found himself a solitary wanderer in a desolate wilderness. Ignorant of any route, unconscious of any accessible inhabited district, he was guided solely by the hope that Providence might rightly direct his footsteps. He wandered day after day amongst these inextricable wilds, feeding on roots and berries, and reposing by night upon some stout tree as the best protection against beasts of prey.

For two whole months did this poor young man exhaust all his patience and fortitude in vain, to extricate himself from so miserable a condition. His appearance became that of a wild man, and at length, spirit-broken, he gave himself up to despair, and lay down resolved, if possible, to die. At that identical moment he was suddenly aroused by the presence of a Llañero, whose astonishment was equal to poor Vowel's thankfulness. He was, in fact, then near a

hamlet, and not far distant from a native force commanded by Bolivar in person.

After a short rest and some refreshment, he was conducted by his guide into Bolivar's presence; and no sooner did the Chief behold him, scan him with surprise from head to foot, and hear of his strange adventures, than he invoked the Deity, the Virgin, and the whole string of saints so familiar to the lips of the Spaniards and their descendants, when they seek to give vent to some overwhelming emotion.

Vowel's miraculous escape was well known at Angostura, and is of undoubted authenticity. I have often listened to the recital of his erratic toils and providential extrication, and I narrate the story with the firmest conviction in my own mind of its truthfulness. I left Captain Vowel behind me at Angostura, again under orders for the Apure; but of his after-fate I am quite ignorant. Alas! I fear for him, as for countless other volunteers in that dread contest. The climate and privation effected infinitely greater ruin than the sword.

The more I heard and saw, the better satisfied I became with my resolution to quit the service.

By dint of observation and inquiry I learned, that a Danish polacre was shipping a cargo of cattle for Barbadoes; and I lost no time in addressing myself to

the captain, who was an Englishman of kind disposition. A short parley brought us to terms, and he agreed to receive me on board for the voyage, and in due course I embarked and sailed, at a time when Bolivar was exercising all the influence of his name at the seat of government, for a demonstration against the Royalists upon an extended scale.

CHAP. XIII.

MEMOIR OF GENERAL BOLIVAR. — PATRIOT CHIEFS. — A CREOLE FORCE. — THE PEOPLE, AND THE WOMEN OF THE COUNTRY.

FEW histories present a more remarkable combination of sacrifice, toil, success, and reverse than that of General Simon Bolivar. His life was one of ceaseless struggle, and his death the consummation of all that mental agony could inflict. He was born in the year 1783, in the province of Caraccas (where he succeeded to a fine patrimonial estate), and at an early age he was sent to Madrid to complete his education. Thence he travelled extensively in Europe, resided for some time in Paris, and was present at the coronation of Napoleon.

He married a lady connected with the noble family of Toro, and conducted her to his estate in the province of Caraccas, where she fell a sacrifice to yellow fever, after a very short residence in Venezuela. After a second visit to Europe and a visit to the United States, he returned to his patrimony at San Mateo (according to the common report of the country) with an ardent passion for gaming, in which he largely indulged. Indeed, his house was said to

have been the resort of all persons of his grade who courted that destructive pursuit.

So early as the year 1806, Miranda made his first attempt to revolutionize the provinces of Venezuela; but it was not until the year 1810, when Spain was engaged in her life struggle with Napoleon, that the name of Bolivar appears to have been connected with such an enterprise. Even at that period he does not seem to have openly abetted the designs of the emancipatists; but simply repaired to England, to endeavour to secure the co-operation of this country in the scheme of independence, or of amelioration.

The colonial tyranny of the mother country was keenly resented by the whole native population. The selfish policy of Spain had led her to support every thing that was restrictive and oppressive to her colonial subjects, with the undisguised object to advance her own exclusive interests. The wrongs consequently inflicted on the colonists were innumerable; but I have heard intelligent South Americans prefer the following specific charges: — First, the exclusion of natives from all official employment; — Secondly, the prohibition to foreigners to penetrate into the provinces or to cultivate commercial relations with the inhabitants, thus crippling the commerce of the country, which the Spaniards designed to monopolize; —Thirdly, the neglect to construct roads or bridges, or

to further the prosperity, of the inland population. —and, Fourthly, the selfish interdiction against the growth of the vine and olive, in order to favour exclusively the wines and oil produced in the mother country.

This last prohibition appeared to me to have been more acutely felt than most others, because the soil was affirmed to be singularly adapted to the culture of the grape at least. In short, every fiscal regulation was enforced, tending to elevate Spain, and to degrade her colonial subjects.

The Spanish public functionaries were affirmed to have been corrupt and extortionate; justice had become a mockery, since the highest bidder could insure its decisions; and every part of the continent subject to Spanish domination, groaned under the cruelest exactions;—in short, an unmitigated tyranny prevailed.

Maunday Thursday, a high religious festival, had been selected for the deposition of the Royalists; and may be said to have been the first serious outburst of the revolution. The day was well chosen; because the Captain-General, the officers of state, and the military thronged the churches of Caraccas, to assist in religious ceremonies; and the insurgents, surrounding the sacred edifices, easily effected the overthrow and capture of the Royalists. Bolivar appears

not long to have hesitated as to the course he should pursue. He ranged himself under the banner of the Independents; and in 1811, while Miranda still headed the liberating forces, Bolivar was invested with the rank of colonel. He was so unfortunate in the earlier part of his career, as to have been misled by insidious counsel, and went so far as to denounce Miranda as a traitor and cause him to be delivered over to the Spaniards; an act which his countrymen generally have deemed to have been perfectly indefensible. It is a stain upon his memory.

The Patriot cause prospered until by a most remarkable coincidence, the great earthquake of 1812, on the anniversary of the outbreak and at the identical hour, occurred, and inflicted wide-spread desolation destroying, according to general report in the country, no less than 30,000 souls. The priests took occasion every where to preach "the visible retribution of Heaven," and with the cross in their hands, harangued the people in the public streets, and stigmatized the rebellion as the invention of Satan. By such means the Royalist sway was resumed, and the insurgents were scattered, but not annihilated.

The most shocking barbarities signalized the resumption of the Royalist authority, which aroused the natives into fresh resistance, and paved the way for that reciprocal extermination, which subsequently

dishonoured the contest, and caused such indiscriminate slaughter. Bolivar, who had abandoned the country and sought refuge in Curaçoa, indignant at the cruel treatment of his partisans, returned to the Main; and having organised a scanty band of followers, began from that moment to display the rapidity of action, and fervid zeal which characterized his after life. So prompt were his movements and rapid his success that, in August 1813, he was again master of the capital, and made a triumphal entry into Caraccas. Seated in a car, he is said to have been drawn into the city by twelve young ladies of good family, attired in white, while other fair hands crowned him with laurel, and strewed his path with flowers, amidst the cheers and exultation of the inhabitants.

How many versions of that remarkable ceremony have I not heard from natives of all grades! — some devoted admirers, others detractive enemies; but all dwelling with ecstasy upon the triumph of a Patriot leader.

Thenceforth Bolivar's career was of the most chequered character. Alternately conquering and defeated, at one time exercising extensive command, and anon a fugitive without a horse or raiment. Mr. Hamilton assured me at Augostura, that upon one occasion he had found him without a change of

linen, and described to me Bolivar's thankfulness for the use of his wardrobe.

On several occasions was he compelled by reverses to fly the country and to seek an asylum, not only at Curaçoa, but also at Jamaica, and at Hayti. While at Jamaica, a hired assassin sought to take his life, and actually plunged a poniard into the heart of his secretary, who was asleep and mistaken for himself.

Notwithstanding the successes of Morillo, who after the Peninsular campaign arrived in Venezuela with 14,000 men, Bolivar still persevered to emancipate his country; and although a wanderer in the islands of the Antilles, maintained communications with his partisans, and at length again headed the native forces on the plains.

The universal hatred of the Spanish rule constituted his advantage, while the ignorance and jealousy of the native leaders, and their ceaseless intrigues, created most of his difficulties, and may doubtless account for the appointment to commands of incompetent men, whose fidelity at least could be relied upon.

After the final victory at Carabobo (which, by the way was gained by the determined gallantry of the remnant of my neglected regiment), and the consequent surrender of the Royalists, Bolivar extended his

services to Peru, where alternate trust, and misgiving so disgusted him, that at length he returned to Columbia, only to encounter the more serious difficulties of governmental organization in his own country.

He appears to have been weakly wedded to a code of his own framing, the Bolivian Constitution, which excited furious rancour amongst his late partisans, who one by one deserted him. A civil outbreak ensued; and the man who had spent his fortune and wasted his energies in the cause of his country, was compelled to fly from his house, and to hide himself from the stilettoes of domestic enemies.

At length, worn out by internal strife and restless suspicion, he resolved to relinquish all authority, and to retire into the station of a simple citizen. His resolution came to late; his health was irremediably undermined, and he died shortly after his relinquishment of power. He died, in fact, worn out and broken-hearted by the persecution of those whom he had sought (sometimes by mistaken means) to serve.

His last address to his countrymen betrayed the deep emotions of a mind which had encountered the most painful vicissitudes for one absorbing object.

"I have abandoned," said he "my fortune and my personal tranquillity in your cause. I am the victim of my persecutors, who have now conducted me to my grave; but I pardon them."

He expired not far from Carthagena, in December 1831, very shortly after his relinquishment of the supreme authority.

Bolivar was mortal, and consequently inherited the failings of our common nature; but it is impossible to contemplate the history of his sacrifices, and his endless sufferings and services, without becoming deeply impressed with his unswerving patriotism.

The war on each side had, as I have said, been conducted upon barbarous principles. "Guerra a muerte," or, as Mina in Old Spain had pronounced it, "war to the knife," was the rule. The cold-blooded massacre of hundreds outraged mercy, and indelibly stained the Christian character of both parties. How often have I gazed upon the monument in the market-place of La Guayra, raised to commemorate the fusillade, which in one day consigned *eight hundred* unhappy captives to the tomb! This was said to have been the retributive work of Bolivar; but should we attempt to enumerate the victims of Spanish vengeance, the numbers and circumstances would horrify the least sensitive reader.

Doubtless the Royalists first introduced this bloody immolation, which at length evoked reprisals by the Patriots in pure self-defence. The well known fate awaiting each in the event of capture, tended naturally to embitter the strife, and on all occasions lent

desperation where courage might have failed, as was exemplified in the citadel of Barcelona.

Bolivar was short of stature and of slender form. His features were small, but his eyes expressive. At the period of my acquaintance with him, he had become prematurely gray, and had a countenance serious and careworn. His voice was singularly dissonant, and his general address to strangers shy and unfavourable. He always appeared to me to be awaiting an unfriendly communication, for his looks were suspicious, and his eyes usually downcast. I have compared my impressions respecting him with those of my friend General Miller, who knew him so well, and we both agreed as to the faulty nature of his general address.

To this defect I have always attributed much of the hostility which prevailed against him. His quickness and activity were unsurpassed, and therein he differed from almost every other native chief.

Paez indeed, a wild herdsman utterly devoid of education, was an active and indefatigable savage; but the original station, and property, and education of Bolivar, combined with his untiring activity, served to maintain his ascendancy.

He possessed another eminent quality, viz. an utter contempt for privation. If reverses demanded sacrifice, he would cast aside all superfluous indul-

gence, and march on foot, and unweariedly with his humblest followers.

Still he had a host of enemies and detractors, who incessantly delighted to asperse his character, and to depreciate his achievements. Endless were the tales recounted by the natives to his prejudice, some of whom even charged him with cowardice; a failing which his whole life belied. He had not the *savoir faire* to enlist universal sympathy; for in the language of General Miller, "Bolivar was not personally popular;"* and notwithstanding his ennobling patriotism, he was at best rather the man of circumstances than the man of choice.

Had Mariño, with his gracious demeanour, possessed Bolivar's sterling qualities, he might have proved (as he had often sought to be) a formidable rival. Paez also, the idol of the Llaneros, was supposed only to want the requisite ambition, to have supplanted Bolivar, at a time when the plains constituted the stronghold of the Independent cause.

In short, I experienced no trifling surprise to discover, in my intercourse with the natives, the little devotion of which Bolivar was personally the object, doubtless attributable to the absence of that individual tact and demeanour which so largely in-

* Memoirs of General Miller, vol. ii. p. 359.

spired the followers of Napoleon with love and admiration. Nor was Bolivar a man of transcendant ability; his talents were respectable, but by no means remarkable.

As a set-off to these disparagements, he was a man of undeniable patriotism, who had sacrificed every thing for his country; and I question if the annals of any nation can present a specimen of purer disinterestedness. When the republic of Bolivia voted him 1,000,000 of dollars, he assigned the whole sum to the purchase of the freedom of 1000 negro slaves.*

His external deportment betokened considerable personal vanity. He had doubtless become inflated by the exaggerated encomiums of the British and American press, which were largely copied into the Gazéta del Orinoco. Enamoured of the uniform of the British Horse Artillery, he adopted it, and strutted with an ill-disguised consciousness of importance.

He was reputed a fluent speaker, but employed the senseless hyperbole for which the Spaniards, at that period, enjoyed an unenviable notoriety. The following example may suffice:—

At the time when the impatience of a large portion

* Memoirs of General Miller, vol. ii. p. 299.

of the Peruvian people demanded the abandonment of the powers confided to Bolivar, and he had resolved to relinquish them and return to Columbia, the friends of tranquillity looked forward with dread to returning anarchy. All the orders of the state consequently, in successive representative bodies, waited upon Bolivar, to implore him to retain the chief authority. He seemed, however, regardless of those importunities, until a deputation of matrons, by eloquence and entreaties, elicited his consent, and in the course of his usual florid oratory, he pronounced the following absurd rhapsody:—"Ladies: Silence is the only answer I ought to give to those enchanting expressions, which bind not only the heart, but duty. When beauty speaks, what breast can resist it? I have been the soldier of beauty, because Liberty is bewitchingly beautiful; she diffuses happiness, and decorates the path of life with flowers." *

Many of the native chiefs were men of education, but the majority had been raised to importance by the casualties of the revolution. In the first cate-

* Memoirs of General Miller, vol. ii. p. 348. My memory as to some facts here recited has been refreshed by the Memoirs of General Miller; and I have also consulted the National and Penny Encyclopædias. Where I differ from these authorities in the quotation of numbers, I have taken in preference the estimate current in the country.

gory was Mariño, who had possessed extensive property in the district of Gueria. Soublett was of commanding exterior, and was reputed to be a man of ability. Before the revolution, he had been a schoolmaster. Santander, Urdaneta, Sucré, and Montilla, were men of cultivated minds; while Paez, Bermudez, Valdes, Gomez, Sardeno, as also Arismendi, were men of low origin, and devoid of education.

The most superior intellect amongst them was Sucré, who was endowed with refined manners and extensive information. He was in earnest in the cause, and under Bolivar commanded the Columbian troops in Peru and Bolivia. It was his good fortune to command the army at the victory of Ayacucho. During an *émeute* in Bolivia he lost an arm. Such was the too frequent reward of services in those provinces. Colonel Sucré, with whom I travelled from Maturin to Angostura, was the brother of that respected chief.

It is perhaps hardly allowable to criticize too nicely the appearance and habiliments of a semi-savage people, striving to throw off an intolerable yoke, the very cause indeed of their denuded condition. To the British soldier, however, the "tatterdemalion bands" (as they were aptly termed by a talented writer upon those countries) presented the

strangest conceivable spectacle; and as few British soldiers ventured to reason upon cause and effect, it tended to excite derision and contempt. A creole force usually consisted of men and lads of all ages and colours; some naked, others with merely a shirt or a pair of drawers; a few wore old military jackets without pantaloons; some were bare-headed, while others had straw hats, or hairy caps. Such as were armed with muskets often strapped their cartouches round their naked loins, whilst the majority had no other arms than pike heads loosely fixed upon short rough sticks. They marched in Indian or single file, and were unrestrained in their movements by practised exercises. The eternal poncho, or blanket with a slit in the centre to admit the head, and depending loosely over the shoulders, served the twofold purpose of daily covering, and nightly warmth. Still, these were the very men adapted to the regions they inhabited; and in the hour of trial, as Morillo had too fatally proved, were more than a match for the heavily accoutred Europeans.

I am sorry to have to record our experience of the addiction of the natives to theft; they have even been known to steal the very shoes from off the feet of the British while asleep. The utmost vigilance scarcely sufficed to guard against their cunning depredations.

Of the women I cannot speak in terms of sweep-

ing condemnation, as I have heard others speak. There existed amongst them the strangest combination of colours and features. Some of the Indian girls (differing, by the way, essentially from the Indian tribes of North America) impressed me by the beauty and softness of their countenances. They were at times playfully coquettish, but in the end discreet. The Sambo or Llañera females, with bronzed skin and fine but scant black hair, were by the habit of the country barely clad, yet there was no immodesty in their general demeanour. They were all expert swimmers; and at Angostura in particular, crowded to bathe within a nominal distance from the men. The line of demarcation was less fastidiously observed than in Europe; but the custom prevailed, and to my observation was never abused. The blacks did not differ in their habits from their tawny compatriots, and certainly exhibited superior external decorum, as compared with those of our West India Islands.

The ladies of pure white extraction observed no medium. They were always either slip-shod and slovenly, or dressed with studied effect; at times they would vie in attire and deportment with the choicest belles of Europe. Few of them were well educated, nor were they remarkable for beauty. Upon the whole, while there was no apparent overt profligacy,

there was no redeeming distinction; for the married woman and the mistress met seemingly on equal terms. A high tone of morals did certainly not exist, but there was nothing publicly observable to shock the most prudish.

CHAP. XIV.

PROGRESS DOWN THE ORINOCO.—INDIAN GRATITUDE.—DISASTERS.—NAUTICAL MISMANAGEMENT.—EXTREMITY.—CAPTURE.—CHANGE OF CONDITION AS PRISONERS.—WE QUIT THE GULF OF PARIA.

On the 23rd December, 1819 (the fifth anniversary, by the way, of our disembarkation at New Orleans), I sailed from Angostura in the polacre called the Industry, which had shipped upwards of eighty head of cattle, and was bound for Barbadoes. The afternoon was clear and tranquil, and I watched the receding city with painful emotion. What had I not endured within its limits? I rejoiced to depart, and yet I sighed to forsake a spot endeared to me by the recollection of the unlooked-for charity which had preserved my life.

We dropped down the river with the stream, passed the fortress of Guyana, and, anchoring at nights (we were too deeply laden to make fast to the bank), met with no untoward occurrence until we brought up at a spot called by the British Sancho Pan, where we proceeded on shore to cut grass for the cattle. Here I experienced the climax of torment, arising from such swarms of mosquitoes that no an-

tecedent or after visitation equalled this. I stamped my feet with rage, and actually roared with agony.

Before arriving at that spot we met with a very impressive instance of native gratitude. An Indian paddled alongside in his canoe, and, with supplicating looks, implored us to give him some salt.

Two or three handsful of the rock-salt, broken into small fragments, and packed in a cask with pork, were handed to him. This unlooked-for supply proved a welcome boon to the delighted savage, who laughed, and clapped his hands, and departed with joyous alacrity. We had drifted with the stream, and thought no more of our Indian, when we beheld a speck which, gradually enlarging as it neared us, proved to be a canoe, and we conjectured that another petition for salt was about to be presented. But, not so: it bore the identical Indian, who, having deposited his salt on shore, paddled after us all that distance, with the prospect of the same space to be regained, in order to present us with a large fish, the spontaneous offering of a grateful heart. The poor fellow threw it on board, his eyes sparkling with pleasure; and then, nodding, and smiling, and showing an intensity of delight, pushed off, and soon paddled himself out of our sight. It was a beautiful trait of natural benevolence.

We continued to float down with a stream run-

ning at the rate of four knots at least, until we approached the mouth of the river, near to a small island, over which birds so incessantly hovered that the British navigator named it "Bird Island."

We anchored for the night; and, here, began to experience a series of disasters which changed our destination, and turned our hitherto tardy but peaceful course into one of appalling danger.

Our captain was seized with fever, and the vessel was committed to the care of the mate, a low, ignorant, and presumptuous American, whose seamanship was as limited as his intellect was barren.

Here, however, let me frankly avow, that, in recording this fact, I am far from desirous to disparage the people of the United States. I had occasion thereafter to observe such kindly and generous qualities in men of those states in my hour of need, that I look back with grateful reminiscence to their disinterested sympathy. There are worthless and ignorant men of all nations; and we had the misfortune, in this instance, to be associated with one of the worst specimens of their people.

A furious hurricane arose in the night, which drove us on shore, where we lay almost high and dry, and the utmost danger threatened our craft. The captain, ill as he was, rushed to the deck, and employed all his nautical skill to avert the destruc-

tion of the vessel and, as the flow and reflux of the tide here operated, at its due return the polacre was once more anchored in deep water. The weather continuing stormy we were again driven on shore, but a second time succeeded in regaining adequate depth, not, however, in this instance, without the loss of an anchor. Two days had been thus consumed, and under circumstances of unusual danger.

The following morning we had weighed, and were quietly gliding seaward, when we suddenly saw our only boat (the painter of which, in the bustle of the preceding hours, had not been made properly fast) detached from the vessel, and about to be lost to us. Again did this intelligence summon our poor captain to the deck, who offered two dollars to any man who would swim after and secure it. A Portugese sailor volunteered, and, divesting himself of superfluous clothing, crossed himself, and plunged into the stream. He had not proceeded many yards before the ill-fated man was seized by an alligator, and, uttering a piercing cry, was roughly upraised for a moment, and then dragged under the water to rise no more.

The shock to all who witnessed this spectacle may be conjectured: of course, the boat was now left to float away, and we lost, as after-experience proved, our main security.

These incidents aggravated our captain's illness, and he became alarmed for his fate. In the most earnest accents he implored of me to bleed him (he was furnished with a lancet); and, urged by his importunity, I at length reluctantly consented, and, with more expertness than my ignorance of such an art warranted me to suppose possible, I effected the object. That process saved him from delirium, and from his bed he was enabled to advise his incompetent subordinate.

Our polacre had been a Spanish prize, purchased at Margarita, and thence taken to St. Thomas in order to obtain a Danish register,—a common practice in that war. She was scarcely sea-worthy, and the sails were too old and tattered to encounter bad weather, or, indeed, to sail upon a wind. Moreover, we had only been provided with provisions for the crew, and fodder for the cattle, for a calculated voyage of a few days; consequently, we began to be threatened with actual want.

It was, therefore, determined to relinquish the attempt to reach Barbadoes, but to make for Tobago.

We crossed the bar at this outlet of the Orinoco, and surveyed a wide expanse of treacherous waters, terminating, on either hand, in gloomy swamp, and forest. Our relentless enemies, the mosquitoes, were indisposed to face the fresh sea-breeze, and took

their departure. No words can describe the sudden comfort of their absence. It was a luxury to descend to the cabin, and there to sit down in peace.

On stretching up the passage called the Serpent's Tongue, with a strong breeze, and the current dead against us, we found our wretched polacre, with her ragged sails, quite unequal to contend with these moderately opposing obstacles; and, after a vain struggle of some hours, our captain advised a further alteration in our course. By his direction, consequently, the vessel was put about, and the Punto de Cacoa, a small unfrequented roadstead, at the south-east angle of Trinidad, was selected as our object, and there it was designed we should anchor.

Our ignorant mate brought up in the most lubberly style, and letting go the anchor, before the vessel had lost her head-way, our cable ran out, and we lost our remaining anchor, and moreover were in danger of running ashore. This catastrophe arose from sheer want of seamanship; but, getting the polacre about, we again stood gently in, and let fall the kedger, our only remaining stay. A sharp breeze, and a rapid current, caused such a strain upon this frail hold, that the vessel drifted, and again were we compelled to seek the mid channel, where a formidable solitary rock, called "the Soldier," admonished us to steer with circumspection. The

poor captain grieved over these disasters, but could only tender the best counsel in his power from his bed.

The ensuing morning disclosed the full extremity of our condition. Without an anchor or boat, and no port into which we might guide our unseaworthy craft, and our sails so rent and tattered as to prove unavailing appliances, we floated under almost hopeless circumstances. Not a sail or coasting boat could we discern, and we were literally the sport of the elements. To aggravate our misfortune, half our crew was sick, and disabled, and our circumstances had become all but desperate.

We had exhausted our provisions and water, had no grass for the cattle, or a stick of fuel remaining even to boil a kettle of water. Raw salt-fish was now our only sustenance. The poor beasts were hourly dropping down dead, and we learned the fact of how little these huge animals can endure. They all appeared to die without a struggle, and were consigned to the deep. We now began seriously to ponder upon our fate. To be reduced to subsist on raw beef, or otherwise to be starved or stranded, appeared our miserable prospect.

As a *dernier resort*, and under the advice of our prostrate captain, we stretched over to the coast of Gueria, under the hope of thence getting a long

reach across the Gulf of Paria, and perchance making the port of Spain. This was a dangerous expedient; for the predatory flecheras, or gun-boats, of the Royalists (who occupied the whole coast) were known to harbour in the creeks and inlets of that shore, to look out for and capture the merchant vessels issuing from the Orinoco. However, this was our last resource, and the scheme was accordingly attempted.

The gulf was favourably placid, and the wind moderate. Late in the afternoon of the 6th of January, 1820, we tacked, and, standing away from the shore, kept the vessel's head as close to the wind as practicable.

Night approached with that rapid obscurity common to a tropical close of day. I had enveloped myself in my cloak, but tried in vain to sleep; and, at length, arising, I addressed my conversation to the steersman, when, of a sudden, we heard the plashing of oars, the gurgling agitation of the waters, and, looking astern, beheld a flechera dashing through the surge with incredible velocity.

"It's a boat!" cried the steersman, "and we're taken;" but, with the instinct of a seaman, he shouted, "Boat a hoy! what do you want?" "We want that ship," said a loud voice, in Spanish; and, in less than a minute, a numerous band of men, sword

in hand, bounded up the rigging and covered our decks. They assailed every individual whom their eyes encountered, but wounded nobody. I received a blow which felled me over a coil of rope, and my cloak was snatched from off my shoulders.

On quickly arising I saw the captain of the flechera mounted on the companion hatchway, and heard him shouting lustily "Mate me est gente!" ("Kill all those people!") but still no one was injured. Approaching and addressing him in Spanish, I hastily disclosed our real situation, and, begging he would spare our people, assured him the vessel was his own.

I answered all his rapid inquiries with as much readiness as my trepidation would allow, and no sooner did our captor become fully cognisant of our forlorn condition, than all bluster ceased, and the utmost suavity marked his tone and deportment.

Well-acquainted with the coast, he guided us by the light of the moon (which now rose with unclouded brightness), through an inconsiderable opening amongst rocks of moderate height, into a secluded natural basin, so smooth, and unruffled, that the kedger sufficed to ensure our anchorage. There lay our ill-omened craft in a state of calm repose, contrasting pleasingly with her late calamitous contest with the elements. We retired to rest, with the

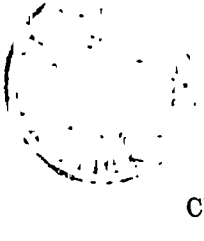
consciousness that our lives were temporarily secure, but still we were prisoners, and in the hands of an enemy whose deeds in those regions had stamped them as relentless; our hearts, therefore, could not fail to be disturbed by doubt and apprehension. The captain of the flechera, a creole, was a man of commanding stature, but so untaught, except in predatory warfare, that he could neither read nor write. His crew consisted of creoles, of various tints and parentage, who voluntarily embraced a life of wild excitement, sweetened by the hope of plunder. The Spanish Government had encouraged many such adventurers to encourage risk in their service, not by the incentive of periodical pay, but by the expectant spoliation of occasional captures. Happily for us, our captor was a man of reputed humanity, and the treatment we experienced confirmed his title to respect for comparative forbearance.

The ensuing morning found us still quietly riding in that tranquil harbour, where nought but the gentlest undulation disturbed the equipoise of our polacre. At the breakfast hour we were regaled, unexpectedly, with casava, turtle, oranges, and cocoa, and the transition from want to profusion almost extorted thankfulness for a change, even to bondage.

In due time the flechera was employed to tow us

from this secluded nook into the gulf, which, agitated by the stiff diurnal breeze, made us once more conscious of our maritime incapacity.

Our captors, however, had not been idle; the sails had been hastily repaired, and our progress, though slow, was no longer impossible. We passed through the shallowest channel of the Bocas, and, rounding the continental headland, once more sailed in the Caribbean Sea.



CHAP. XV.

A SEARCH BY THE CAPTORS. — A DANGEROUS LETTER. — ITS ABSTRACTION. — SPOLIATION OF THE CAPTURED. — CUMANA OUR DESTINATION. — A TARDY LANDING. — KIND RECEPTION. — HANDSOME TREATMENT, AND DEPARTURE. — A FLECHERA. — VOYAGE TO LA GUAYRA.

We had scarcely been an hour clear of the gulf ere our captor descended to the cabin, accompanied by two or three of his myrmidons, and commenced a general search. We had, in some degree, anticipated this retarded process, and had, to the best of our ability, made preparation for it.

The supercargo, a diminutive South American, who was charged with the sale of the cattle in the colonies for a firm at Angostura, was my constant adviser. Our interests were identical, and the danger to each of us imminent. We were consequently in hourly consultation, and a joint plan of action was adopted by us.

Of all on board I was the most obnoxious to peril. My passport as "Captain," my many articles of uniform, and some letters in my possession of questionable import, all marked me as a prospective victim. I had taken pains to thrust under loose sails, or to scatter

in apparently unselected corners, every suspicious article, of whatever denomination; and, when the trying hour of search actually arrived, I assumed an air of affected unconcern. The existing contest, however, was one of too fearful desperation to allow me to play such a part with perfect equanimity.

Each article of uniform was piece by piece drawn forth, and its owner inquisitively sought for. It was useless to attempt to conceal the fact that they belonged to me; and I was admonished by a finger, significantly drawn across the throat, that my doom was inevitable. I thought so myself, and relinquished all hope of preserving my life.

The search proceeded, and all the papers were secured. They were counted, their external appearance scrutinised, and the whole collection was tied in a silk handkerchief, with a knot of recognisable form, and placed upon a locker; for there was not a single secure fastening throughout that crazy polacre. An intimation that death would be the lot of any one who should be hardy enough to touch the precious deposit, was given with a voice and manner that betokened sincerity.

I entertained, as I have stated, but slender expectations of ultimately preserving my life: but the divine principle of hope is vital; and, clinging to it, I naturally desired to guard against every possible

mischance. Amongst the papers found in my possession, was a letter from Viscountess Perceval (which I had preserved with scrupulous care) to Lord Cochrane, who was then an admiral in the Chilian service, and had made the Spaniards fully sensible both of his presence and prowess. His name was, consequently, as much hated as dreaded. It had been suggested by that kind lady, that, in the event of my falling in with his lordship, such an introduction might prove serviceable; and I had preserved it for such a possible contingency. It was sealed with black wax; and its exact contents, although divined, were unknown to me. The heat of a tropical climate had relaxed the solidity, and effaced the external stamp and coronet, of the seal. It had, consequently, the appearance of an impression rudely slurred over.

Alive, of course, to all the forthcoming investigation, and conscious of the searching scrutiny of which I should be the object, I felt intense apprehension for the probable interpretation of this letter, and communicated my anxiety, first to the supercargo, and afterwards to the captain; and we all agreed that it was important to our common safety to secure that letter to Lord Cochrane.

Prior to its seizure, I had endeavoured to consign it and other papers to the sea; but had watched in vain for the safe opportunity to do so. Now, how-

ever, our general opinion was that we *must* make an effort to redeem it; and the question was, how we should effect the object.

There was something seemingly miraculous in our disentanglement from this perplexity; and the sceptical might well be excused in doubting the strict reality of our means of extrication. Here, however, I pledge my faith to the truthfulness of an incident which, at the first blush, wears the semblance of unaccountable chance, but which, more deeply considered, assumes the aspect of providential interposition.

I had for a long time past carried in my pocket a small piece of black sealing-wax. How I first came to put and to retain it there, I have not the remotest recollection. I used, however, to transfer it to my mouth when climbing or travelling, in order to promote salivary action; and, upon this remarkable occasion, there was at hand the very thing needful to our purpose. The captain produced a sheet of Bath paper; and, while the supercargo kept watch, I hurriedly wrote a letter in terms the most favourable to our circumstances, sealed it with my tiny remnant of black wax, which I thumbed in a manner most imitative of the original, and the next question was, how we should abstract the one, and substitute the other.

We resolved, however, to effect the transfer, and accordingly watched for the fitting opportunity. I can never forget the hazard of that moment. My diminutive but plucky friend, the supercargo, was the vigilant watchman; and at his bidding, "Now is the time," I tremblingly seized the handkerchief, undid the knot, snatched from the bundle the fatal letter, and substituted the counterfeit. My imitation of the original tie was perfect, and the fraud was not discovered. The after-perusal of the letter to Lord Cochrane made me thankful, indeed, that I was relieved from the inevitable interpretation of that most dangerous document. It breathed a hope that, ere it should be presented, the bearer (and my name was mentioned) would have established a claim to his lordship's attentions by his "previous services in the glorious cause." I have not the smallest doubt that the caption of that letter would inevitably have sealed my fate.

I have said that our captor deserved credit for comparative forbearance. He forbore to inflict bodily injury upon any one, or to sacrifice a single life; but there his merit halted. Every farthing of money was taken from us all, and we were despoiled of every portable article belonging to us. Even my hat was taken from off my head, and the stockings from off my feet. In lieu of the former, I was fur-

nished with an old straw hat; and there I stood a captive, without a penny, a pair of stockings, or a second shirt.

The spoil was distributed amongst the victor crew; and in the midst of our despondency, we could not resist a smile at contemplating one swarthy fellow, who acted as cook. A good pair of French grey trowsers, embellished with a broad silver stripe (late my property), fell to this man's lot. He instantly put them on; and thus, unusually smart, fell to cooking, without for a moment relinquishing the habit of wiping his alternately black and greasy fingers on his small clothes. In less than a quarter of an hour, the condition of my gay regimental trowsers caused us immoderate laughter.

We brought up at Carupinar, and our commandant went on shore. Thence we hugged the land, and sailed round Margarita. I gazed upon that well known island, hoping, yet by some instinctive impulse dreading, lest some cruiser might see and intercept us. No such interception occurred; and we were conducted towards the port of Cumana, but our ill-conditioned vessel appeared to demur; and her shattered sails refusing their office, the frail bark was drifted half way to Barcelona. We were boarded by Spaniards, with a Captain Guerrero for their head, and every endeavour was essayed to

combat the natural weakness of the vessel in vain. Boats and small craft were then brought into requisition, and by dint of pulling and rowing we were at length conducted to the desired port. Meanwhile, we had all been sworn and subjected to the closest examination touching the enemy, and our individual knowledge of their movements was sought to be elicited.

Arrived at Cumana, I was introduced to the Governor-General Cires, and was received by that chief with every outward demonstration of kindness. In the most delicate manner he deplored the spoliation to which we had been subjected, and considerately presented me with a roll of silver, saying, "You will want a little money for general purposes, and there is a trifle to supply your immediate necessities." He expressed his regret at our recent deprivation, but added, "You know those men regard such acquisitions as their lawful plunder, and I regret that I cannot direct the restitution of your property." All this was done in the kindest manner, and I began to surmise that the Spaniards were not the fiends their enemies had represented them to be.

From the presence of the general I was transferred to a quiet bourgeois family, with whom I was permitted to remain a week. I was free to roam through the town, which displayed no remarkable

feature, to look on as a spectator in the billiard room, and was even allowed to be present at a Marionette representation, the subject of which was scriptural, but its details intensely absurd.

Here at Cumana I was the object of active charity. One Spanish officer gave me a hat, another a shirt or two, and a third a pair or two of stockings. Thus was my wardrobe replenished. Again was I sworn and catechised upon every subject referable to the Independents, and was closely questioned as to the fate of the prisoners captured before those walls, and slaughtered in the manner I have antecedently related. Dreading the consequences to myself should the truth transpire, I affected ignorance of their fate, but expressed a persuasion that they yet survived as prisoners. My testimony was committed to writing, and that record subsequently influenced my destination.

I still continued to suffer from ague; and during its periodical attacks experienced the most humane attention from every one. At length I was suddenly conducted to the beach, and handed into a flechera bound for La Guayra, which set sail in the evening, and the following forenoon we brought up at the Moro of Barcelona, which had so recently been made familiar to me. There we landed to pass a

few hours, and a boat from the opposite direction at the same time landed the Spanish Colonel Tovar, who was proceeding to Cumana to relieve General Cires, about to depart on temporary leave of absence.

I was seized with my tertian attack of ague, and the Colonel extended to me the most benignant attentions. With unparalleled suavity and kindliness he directed the application of every available remedy, and his servants under his direction tended me with zealous care. Again had I experienced the active charity of an enemy.

Colonel Tovar conversed much with me, and expressed an anxious interest in my fate. He promised to write to the general-in-chief, Morillo, in my behalf, and subsequently fulfilled his promise.

At parting he consigned to the care of the captain of the flechera sundry small articles, delicacies in that country, for my consumption, with an earnest command that they might be devoted to my exclusive use.

Our flechera was a boat at once long and deep, and capable of containing a goodly freight. The gunwale was so low, that but for the adjunct of pliant skins extending from the stern-sheets to the bows, capable at will of extension or depression, as occasion suited, we should have shipped water,

and been in danger of foundering. If, however, the breeze should freshen, and the sea become turbulent, the rapid tension of these artificial sides afforded ample security, combined with lightness. The craft sailed swiftly, and seemed in all respects suited to coasting purposes.

Throughout this rapid voyage lines were employed night and day, and multitudes of a fish (pege-rey), called in the West Indies the king-fish, were caught. They are much prized and considered a delicacy. Strange to say, as we approached La Guayra, not a single fish of any kind could we hook, and such was reported to be the invariable experience of that coast.

In four days' time we reached La Guayra; and entering that unsafe port, contended with the ever-rolling surf that breaks upon its shores. After the usual struggle we landed.

I could form in this short interval little judgment of the country, along the sea-board of which we had glided. A continuous belt of lofty hills, occasionally swelling into mountainous masses, constituted an outline of monotonous aspect. Once only between Barcelona and La Guayra did I land; but that one descent introduced me to a picturesque village, where comfort and fertility appeared to abound.

As we neared our destination mountains upreared their rugged crests, and the Silla of Caraccas, with the Sierra dividing the port from the city, by a few intermediate miles, began to exhibit an imposing elevation.

CHAP. XVI.

LANDING. — ALTERED CONDITION. — INCARCERATION, WITH ITS REFLECTIONS AND PROSPECT. — UNLOOKED-FOR VISITS. — AN UNEXPECTED ENTERTAINMENT. — SUDDEN SUMMONS TO DEPART. — INTERVIEW WITH THE CAPTAIN-GENERAL. — RESULT. — CARACCAS. — AN EARTHQUAKE. — ILLNESS. — INLAND DESTINATION. — THE MOUNTAINS OF THE CUCUISAS.

On landing I followed the captain of the flechera to the residence of the commandant, through portions of the town where trading activity appeared to prevail.

I waited, by direction, outside the house, while my conductor entered, and, after a short lapse of time, was accosted by an aged officer, who desired me to follow him. He led the way without uttering another syllable, and conducted me to an outskirt, where, connected with some fortifications, were small irregular buildings, over which sentries were posted, and a contiguous guard of soldiers idly loitered. Keys were demanded and produced, a huge padlock was unlocked, a massive iron bolt withdrawn, and a well-fended door thrust open. I was desired to enter, and did so; and without another word being spoken, the door was closed upon me, the bolts made

fast, and I found myself the solitary occupant of a drear, unfurnished room, about twenty feet square, with stone basement, two windows secured by strong iron bars, and dingy walls which had once been white.

What anguish and terror seized my heart at that moment! How I gazed around this naked room, fraught with images of death, I leave the reader to determine!

There I stood apparently doomed, and hopeless of human succour or passing sympathy; death, premature but inevitable, seemed to stare me in the face, and folding my arms, and pacing that dreary room, and ejaculating strange and incoherent sentences, I consumed the next two hours.—All hopes of life had abandoned me, and I began to dwell upon the probable circumstances of my exit from this world, when the bolt was withdrawn, and the same aged officer entered, accompanied by persons bearing a camp couch (an elongated form of the canvass camp-stool), who deposited their load in my apartment, together with a pillow and a single sheet.

The town adjutant (for such that aged functionary proved to be) handed me three reals, and informed that I should daily receive that allowance, which amounted in the coin of the country to something exceeding one shilling. He directed me to

apply to the guard for whatever I might desire to purchase, and again left me to my own solitary reflections.

Worn out by anxiety I laid me down to rest, but alas, not to sleep. I dreaded midnight assassination, said to be a mode of dispatch practised by the royalists. Every footstep or distant sound caused me to start up, and await the assassin's knife. My nights were consequently sleepless, and my days consumed in restless reflections. One impression I loved to encourage, viz., the manner in which I would meet death, if publicly executed. In that event I vowed (and feel sure I should have carried out my resolution) to encounter death without flinching. I knew my enemy, and would have scorned to ask for mercy, where no clemency would be shown me.

For twelve long days did I endure this close incarceration, relieved only upon two occasions. One day my prison door was suddenly unbarred, when in walked some six or seven gentlemen, who had procured permission to visit me. They proved to be English and American merchants trading to that port. The chief spokesman was Mr. Wood, an Irishman, who employed every consoling term to fortify my spirits. His companions were equally solicitous to comfort me, and when at length they departed, they left me with the assurance that no

means should be left unessayed to promote my safety. Mr. Wood hastened to the commandant, and offered his security to any amount, with a view to secure my release from close captivity, but the proposition was not entertained.

On another occasion my door was thrown open, and in marched, in full costume, the captain of the guard. His name was Coro, and addressing me in Spanish, he asked if I had not been in Spain; my answer in the affirmative led to a long conversation respecting that country, which terminated with a request, on his part, that I would dine with him that day.

Of course I was too glad to accept so unlooked-for an invitation, and consequently at the appointed hour, the serjeant conducted me from the prison to the adjacent guard-room, where a nice dinner procured from the *posada* awaited me. An unusual repast, some good wine, and fragrant cigars made me temporarily happy, and I left my entertainer with the warm acknowledgments which his kindness and condescension deserved at my hands. In the meantime, my accumulated sufferings began to exhibit their external symptoms. I was attacked by those excruciating "malditas" which assail the joints in the form of irritating blains; and what with my bodily sufferings and mental conflict, I became pitiably ill.

In this situation, one brilliant afternoon, I was summoned by my aged supervisor to accompany him to the commandant's quarters. He silently led the way, and with painful exertion I limped after him. We had not proceeded many yards, ere we met the very same merchants, promenading in a body, who had paid me a charitable visit. They stopped to greet and to comfort me, and observing my disquietude, used every persuasive art to sustain my hopes, although they afterwards informed me that their own impressions at that moment consigned me to death.

Arrived at the house of the commandant, where in like manner I had stood twelve days before, I beheld a mounted soldier completely armed, and a saddle-mule standing by his side.

The lapse of a few minutes brought out the town adjutant, who delivered written instructions to the soldier, and directed me to mount the mule. I did so, and was forthwith on my way to Caraccas.

There was so benevolent an expression in the countenance of my escort, that I instantly reposed confidence in him. He was a soldier of the regiment of Castile, and his conduct to me proved him to be a man of gentle and humane disposition. We passed the belt of Cocoa-nut trees, which then formed so bold a feature on the margin of the bay of La Guayra,

and shortly began to ascend the mountain which interposes between that port and the capital. On reaching the summit, we passed under dripping trees, humid with the everlasting clouds that flit around it, and stopping for an instant at a miserable *venta* established to refresh travellers, we reached the descending point just at close of day. At an amazing depth beneath us lay the city of imposing magnitude, with a moderate expanse of cultivated vicinage, and mountainous development on every hand.

The customary sudden darkness stole upon us as we began our precipitous descent, and we had not proceeded far, ere I heard the clatter of swords, and the approaching tramp of horses' feet. The obscurity was too dense to enable me to peer through it, and I became impressed with the conviction that arms were at hand to dispatch me. My recent suffering had unnerved me, and I was consequently more than ordinarily the slave of apprehension.

However, the party of horsemen overtook and passed us with the usual salutation of *buena noche*, and on inquiry as to their character and destination, my guide informed me, that under the casualties of almost universal warfare, travellers, of whatever denomination, rarely ventured to journey without arms. We reached the city of Caraccas in safety, and I was

conducted to the residence of the captain general, Don Ramon Correa.

I was ushered into the presence of a pompous aged man, who sat surrounded by officers of his staff, in a state of dignified *negligé*. He did not condescend to bow as I entered, but in a tone of assumed severity exclaimed haughtily, "Who are you?" I answered with suitable meekness, "I am the unfortunate English Captain your prisoner." The only gazette published, of course under the surveillance of the government, had notified my capture, which had created more sensation than could possibly have been conjectured, and by the designation of "the English Captain" I had become rather extensively known.

Without further preface, the captain-general demanded if I spoke French, and an answer in the affirmative entailed upon me a long conversation in that language. All stateliness disappeared, I was invited to be seated, and a kind familiarity now pervaded our intercourse. At the end of an hour at least, a bell was rung, and an aide-de-camp with one arm was directed to conduct me to the *posada*, with an intimation to the landlord that I was to be supplied with all needful entertainment, at the expense of the captain-general. There the aide-de-camp quitted me, and again was I as free as I had heretofore been at Cumana.

The news of my arrival in Caraccas quickly circulated, and multitudes of people, urged by curiosity, crowded the *posada* in order to get a glimpse at me, and I became the observed of all observers. The house was literally beset, and I was gazed at with intense curiosity. While standing in the billiard room, which was thronged to overflow, I observed my mercantile friend of La Guayra, Mr. Wood, to enter. He soon gave me to understand that I was to sup with him, and that he had directed a camp bed to be prepared for me in his own bedroom.

I managed to emerge from the crowd, and to walk up the principal street of Caraccas, which, after my recent limited experience of towns, impressed me by its commanding length and breadth. In due time, I had supped with Mr. Wood and a Spanish Colonel, named Rodriguez; and at the hour of rest, went to repose in my allotted berth, and there learned from Mr. Wood, that anxiety for my fate had allured him to the city. Previously to our meeting, he had visited the captain-general, and with him had pleaded for my safety.

He repeated to me (incredulous as I was) the captain-general's assertion, that my life was not in danger. Here it first transpired that the perusal of my papers had determined General Morillo to see me himself; and my transit to his head-quarters

had therefore been directed. Mr. Wood quitted me the following morning, and I was left in Caraccas, each moment becoming more and more disabled by the cruel malady with which I was then stricken.

I remained in the city three days, and to the best of my ability explored it. Its buildings commenced at the scarcely terminated slope of the intermediate mountain range, dividing it from the sea. It was then about a mile in length, and consisted of a series of parallel streets intersected at right angles. The principal street, then called *La Calle de la Mansana,* was of imposing breadth, and contained good houses and shops, all of white exterior, and impressed the traveller by their comparative architectural pretensions. No house boasted of more than one story in height; but there was allotted to each a breadth which compensated for restricted elevation.

Emerging from the main street, you entered a wide *plaza* devoted to the market, where stood also a noble cathedral with a lofty spire, which, although partially rent, had still withstood the shock that in 1812 had crumbled, or prostrated so many inferior buildings. Most of the churches were in a dilapidated state, shaken by the fatal earthquake; but all had received the aid of art to fit them for temporary purposes. Except the main street, there

was no other redeemed from the usual mediocrity attaching to bye streets.

After the second day of my arrival at Caraccas, my ailments so increased, that I was glad to court my bed, even in the daytime. While thus reposing, I heard a loud outcry, and experienced various indications of unusual excitement. I started up only to be conscious of an indescribable sensation. More from curiosity than fear, I rushed to the window, and beheld the streets thronged with countless inhabitants, who had, with no unusual celerity, hastened into the open air. We had been visited by an earthquake, which happily produced no mischief; and in an hour's time all further perturbation had subsided. This seemed to be no unfrequent occurrence; and such an event having passed harmlessly, became a guarantee for at least a short respite from so terrible a visitation.

I was warned that the ensuing day was appointed for my departure inland. That announcement was most unwelcome; for my state of suffering was hourly becoming more acute; so much so, that the host of the *posada* waited upon the captain-general to acquaint him with the fact, and to represent my helpless condition. Thereupon a surgeon was ordered to visit me, and he, it appeared, in vain announced my incapacity to travel. Go I must; and in the after-

noon the soldier who had escorted me from La Guayra was at the door of the posada, and again mounted on a mule, I began a long inland journey on the 10th February.

We rested for the night at a small village about four leagues distant from Carraccas, the intermediate distance being devoid of scenic interest, although esteemed rich and productive.

Early on the following morning we started over a mountain route, at first sterile and of desert aspect, but, when the summit had been climbed, we began to estimate the proverbial richness of the province.

Descending to a fruitful valley, in which stood the village of *San Pedro*, we again ascended to a moderate elevation, and traversing a somewhat undulatory surface, beheld a wide expanse of rich and varied cultivation. Few scenes can surpass the glory of this beautiful mountain range. Not a patch of ground was wasted. From the summit to the base, on either hand, the soil teemed with productiveness. On the higher ridges and slopes European fruits and vegetables flourished; and in the contiguous valleys, of ample breadth, we contemplated the lavish fertility, and varied products of the tropics. Numerous cottages and rural homesteads—some, indeed, most romantically situated, tended to enrich the scenery,

and to impress the beholder with its peerless beauty. I had been prepared at Carraccas for unusual gratification in the contemplation of this favoured range; but its extent and florescence far outstripped the imagination, and filled me with wondering delight.

Droves of mules, some even numbering 150, frequently passed us, laden with produce for the coast. The amazing size, power, and spirit of these invaluable animals impress the reflective European with the bountiful economy of Nature. The race is comparatively unknown in England. There the ill-conditioned, diminutive creature called a mule is a mere caricature of the stately and mettlesome animal of these regions, one of whose rarest qualities it is to thrive and preserve a high condition upon the scant, and dry, and apparently worthless weeds of sterile districts. First-rate riding mules are of more delicate shape and quicker action, and differ as much as the racehorse from their plebeian kin. Some are of priceless value.

Travelling for miles along the summit of these magnificent mountains, we surveyed from their inland extremity a picturesque valley containing three hamlets called *Las Cucuisas;* and thence our route lay amidst thriving plantations and respectable habitations, to the town of Victoria. This town was open and undefended; the houses of the usual

whiteness; the streets broad and neat; and the surrounding soil vying with the rest of the valley of Aragua in rich fertility. There I saw fields of wheat and oats; far inferior, however, to their kind in Europe; for the plants were diminutive, and the ears considerably smaller.

CHAP. XVII.

MARACAY. — HUMANE TREATMENT. — NOVEL FORM OF MARCH. — VALENCIA. — INCREASED MOUNTAIN EXPERIENCE. — MULES. — TURKEY-BUZZARDS. — MIDNIGHT REFLECTIONS. — ARRIVAL AT PAO.

EARLY the following morning we departed for *Maracay*, crossing the small river of Aragua, from which the beautiful valley is named, and passed over elevated hills to the town of San Mateo, near to which the chateau and lands of Bolivar are situated, and where the soil continued to exhibit the same fruitfulness. The town of San Mateo was small and undeserving of notice; but the former country residence of Bolivar, built on an elevated site commanding the high road, and beyond it an extensive landscape, was naturally an object of curiosity. It was in a state of dilapidation; and the window of the saloon had, I was informed, served as an embrasure to a twenty-four-pounder gun, to check the advance of his adherents. I stood at that consecrated window, and looked out upon a broad expanse of fruitful land, once ministering to the treasury of its absent lord. The prospect was not the best selected in this region of general attractiveness to excite admiration; but

the yield, as far as casual observation went, appeared inferior to none.

We journeyed on through a hilly district to the town of Tumero, where a church of more than ordinary external emblazonment proclaimed the earlier devotion of the community. Throughout these Alpine ranges the goitre was painfully discernible, especially amongst the female inhabitants, but in the vicinity of Tumero it was almost universally distinguishable. We were bound to Maracay, four leagues distant, and on our route beheld numerous plantations of the cocoa; small trees so sensitive and tender that, to insure their healthful growth, it was always necessary to defend them by an outline of loftier trees, to protect them from strong breezes.

We arrived at Maracay late in the afternoon, and I was conducted to the house of the commandant, Don Cristoval Zurita. He, his wife and servants, came out, at our arrival, merely to gratify their curiosity; but no sooner did they behold me, than mere idle motive gave place to intense pity.

I have already related how the medical report at Caraccas had certified my unfitness to travel, and that, notwithstanding, I had been consigned to a journey disproportioned to my strength. I had struggled through the route solely, under providence, supported by the unwearied attentions of my humane

companion, the soldier of the regiment of Castile, who, with untiring charity, had afforded me every care, and had displayed in my behalf the utmost solicitude.

The heat of the sun, the frequent rugged character of our route, and the length of our journeys had nearly exhausted me. Bodily pain had tended to dim the interesting scenes through which I had passed, and at times I scarcely knew how to support my sinking frame.

This day's march had fairly prostrated me, and I arrived at Maracay in a state of fearful agony. I was, in short, so ill as with difficulty to sit erect upon the mule, or even to articulate.

A communication from my escort induced the commandant to look attentively at me, and turning to his wife he exclaimed, "to what a condition is this unfortunate gentleman reduced. He cannot travel further in this state, we must take care of him." Instant orders were given to prepare a bed for me (in so warm a climate, a couch, a sheet, and pillow were sufficient), and I was carefully lifted from the mule, and gently conveyed to their own sitting room. A surgeon was sent for, my wounds were dressed, and the most benignant attentions were lavished upon me. I heard nothing but gentle accents; words of kindness and encouragement flowed

from every tongue, and, for a whole week, experienced the tenderest nursing. All this, be it remembered, was from the hands of an enemy reputed cruel and relentless. In good truth human charity, even in the midst of strife and bloodshed, is, by Almighty dispensation, widely prevalent.

A message was despatched to the general-in-chief, Morillo, to account for my detention, and under this unlooked-for interposition I became rapidly convalescent. Thus recruited, my onward progress was arranged, but so careful was my humane host to shield me from a relapse, that he directed a litter to be prepared, and relays of black bearers bore me on their shoulders to the city of Valencia, through the hamlet of San Joaquin, and by the margin of the lake of Valencia, an extensive body of water highly favourable to agricultural irrigation. From that place to Valencia there was a visible decrease in fertility, and the route assumed an arid and neglected aspect.

Valencia was a vast irregular town, built without tasteful design, but containing many churches, and some fine buildings. It enjoyed an extensive trade, owing to its comparative contiguity to Puerto Cabello, from which it is twelve leagues distant. Here I quitted my litter, felt renovated and equal to masculine exertion, and after a repose of one day, I

again mounted a mule to traverse once more a desert mountain range towards Pao, at that time the head-quarters of General Morillo.

We journeyed on through a district decreasing in cultivation with every step, until we traversed plains of extensive pasturage, where herds were seen to be browsing upon a yield of scanty fodder. Thence passing the small town of Tocuito, a hamlet of some rural pretensions, we approached an upland of the customary barrenness towards mountains of reputed difficulty; first having to pass the plains of Carabobo, wide, bleak, and then containing only three habitations. These plains have become remarkable by two battles, the one fought ere the arrival of Morillo, and the other, which ended in the last route of the Royalists, and the final triumph of the Independents.

Here we were warned against the assaults of banditti, who were said to infest the mountains, and to render even life insecure. We joined some travellers, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, and, thus fortified by numbers, we made for the mountains.

We encountered more than ordinary inequalities, until the passage of a clear stream, and an abrupt uprise made us conscious of forthcoming labour. We had to cross *La Loma*, a mountain of such elevation, and capricious geological structure as to awaken anxiety in the minds of those best acquainted with

Alpine difficulties. I was subsequently informed by General Morillo, that La Loma surpassed, in ruggedness and perilous formation, any mountain he had crossed in South America.

Not only was the route tortuous, the path treacherous, and occasional patches of the ascent formidably steep, but we had to traverse narrow ledges, with frightful precipices right and left, and on such occasions to abstain from interference (as we were emphatically instructed) with the mules.

I religiously followed the directions of the guide, and observed with pleasing astonishment the singular caution and tact of the poor plodding animals, upon whose marvellous instinct our safety depended. At times the one I bestrode appeared to exhibit terror, but the cautious, tiny steps with which he threaded the most dangerous passes, impressed me with gratitude, as well as admiration, for his docile and intelligent adaptation to circumstances.

One of the most remarkable features in the performance of these wonderful animals, inured to mountain obstacles, is their curious mode of sliding on their haunches down occasional paths too steep for headlong descent. In short their varied mode of action in such a region constitutes a natural phenomenon.

We crowned La Loma, and looked around upon

universal sterility. Not a tree or shrub, or a bird, except the never-failing *zamora*, or turkey-buzzard, appeared in sight. All was desolation, and the prospective route tendered no promise of speedy amelioration.

The *zamora*, or turkey-buzzard, is, in size, equal to that of a young turkey, which it in some degree resembles. The species in those regions appeared to be ubiquitous, for whether in cities, towns, or villages, the mountains, or on the plains, there you meet with flocks of these voracious creatures. They are of brown colour, or rather dingy black, and everywhere appear to disregard the approach of men. In their external form they resemble the eagle, to which family they undoubtedly belong, and although when resting they appear to be sluggish, and much inclined to repose, in their flight they invariably aspire, in the language of Moore, "with their eyes on the sun." Their altitude on the wing far exceeds that of any bird I have beheld.

They are everywhere the scavengers of their departments, and pounce upon refuse and offal wherever deposited. Amongst the barren mountains which I have described, they watched for the exhausted mule, and, (as I practically observed) in this traversée, quickly alighted upon a casual carcass, in numbers, and with a rapacity never to be forgotten.

Happily the mule so assailed was not mine, for he bore me in safety.

We continued our route until eight o'clock in the evening, the mountains of this narrow belt becoming gradually diminutive, until they became mere swelling hills. We halted at a solitary cottage, the only habitation we had seen since we had quitted the neighbourhood of Carabobo, and there we reposed for the night.

It was arranged that we should start very early in the morning, to reach "the loyal town of Pao," at that time the head-quarters of the royalist chief; and as I approached the locality that harboured that dreaded man, whose reputed deeds of rapine and bloodshed had filled civilised Europe with dismay, I experienced an acceleration of the solicitude that had so long consumed my peace.

Here let me remark that no amount of courageous determination can countervail the pangs of slow and lingering incertitude. Pronounce the doom of death, and the sentence might be sternly met; but protracted doubt, and nicely balanced contingencies of good or evil, inevitably undermine the strongest holds of resolution. So it was with me. Weeks of apprehension had rendered me timid and nervous, and each succeeding moment served to augment my perturbation.

We halted for the night at this lone cottage, and, as usual, the insects drove us to sleep in the open air. My companions slept soundly. They were not consumed by the anxieties that distracted me. I snatched minutes of fretful slumber, but unconquerable restlessness supervened, and I tossed, and turned, and reflected until sleep entirely forsook my eyelids.

At about midnight I became broad awake, and sat up to contemplate the moon, high in the heavens, which lighted with brilliancy the circumjacent hills. They were bold, but yet, compared with their precursors, tame and subdued. The herbage that covered them received a yellow tint from the pale beams, and I eyed them with mournful interest.

From them I roused my contemplation to the orb that shed her light upon those grassy mounds. I asked myself, in deep dejection, "Is this my last look upon that moon? Shall I ever see her rise again?" I was in the hands of despotic and revengeful enemies, and I mentally asked that question, with a doubt as to an affirmative reply. My fate, so soon to be decided, was too questionable to admit of serious reliance upon safety, and I felt a sort of mournful relief in speculative foreboding.

In due time my associates were alert, the mules caparisoned, and we continued our route. Descend-

ing from the hills we entered a spacious plain interspersed with occasional thin wood, and beheld horses and cattle grazing, indicative at least of peaceful industry.

Through groves of increasing density we approached the town, and entered it at half past six in the morning. Although it had received the designation of the "loyal *town* of Pao," it was nothing more than an extensive village, with a possible population of some 800 souls.

CHAP. XVIII.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ROYALIST CHIEF. — UNLOOKED-FOR ENFRANCHISEMENT. — GOOD ENTERTAINMENT. — AN ANGLO-SPANISH OFFICER. — HIS SINGULAR HISTORY. — NATIVE CURIOSITY TO SEE AN ENGLISHMAN. — MEMOIR OF GENERAL MORILLO. — RETURN TO THE COAST. — AN OLD COMRADE IN CAPTIVITY. — ARRIVAL AT LA GUAYRA: THERE EMBARK.

We halted at the house of the General-in-chief Morillo, and as our arrival was announced, all the officers of his staff came forth to see me. The general, an early riser, was up and attired, and I was forthwith conducted into his presence.

It will not be difficult to divine the agitation of mind under which I confronted that celebrated man, whose character was so differently chronicled by the contending parties. While the Patriots denounced him as a sanguinary fiend, the Royalists, and the natives subject to his rule, panegyrised his forbearance and humanity. Between the two reports I oscillated, and dread and hope alternately prevailed. The moment had however arrived when I was to test his claim, as far as I was personally concerned, to either character.

He rose at my entrance, bowed politely, and handed me a chair. I breathed more freely and began to augur favourably.

I saw before me a man, tall, and of large proportions, with dark hair and eyes, a full face, and features betokening some benevolence. He wore his morning costume, consisting of white pantaloons, jacket, and waistcoat, decked with silver braiding, and his Hessian boots were edged at the top with silver, and had silver tassels. He always dressed studiously.

His first address to me was one of apology, that I should have been compelled to travel so far in ill health. He proceeded to inform me that many of his friends had written to him in my behalf, and had begged, as a personal satisfaction to themselves, that I should be treated with consideration. He told me he had carefully perused my papers and evidence, that he had formed a favourable opinion of me, and "desired the pleasure of some conversation with me." With the utmost complacency he proceeded, "You have suffered much in this wild country; stay, however, at my head-quarters and rest yourself. I shall be happy to see you with the officers of my staff at my table; but in order to relieve your mind from all further anxiety, I announce to you that you are from this moment free, and after a time you may

return to the coast by whatever route you may prefer."

Here then at length was unspeakable solace to my heart, and I knew that, under the providential guidance of heaven, I owed my deliverance to a knowledge of the Spanish language. By its means I had been able to converse with all the functionaries through whose jurisdiction I had passed, and an interest had thus been excited for my fate, which had so effectively prevailed at head-quarters.

When General Morillo had concluded his conversation with me, and the hour of breakfast was approaching, he said, "I shall have the pleasure to introduce you to a countryman of yours. Captain *Albernoz* (I write the name as it was pronounced) is an Englishman, and will be here directly." In due time Albernoz entered, and I received a formal introduction to a Spanish officer, whose tongue betrayed his British origin.

We sat down to a breakfast at once select and profuse; even choice liqueurs abounded; and all betokened a costly menage. My recent colloquy with the chief had unchained the bonds of apprehension by which I had been so long restrained; and the early morning air having whetted my appetite, I partook of this, to me princely, meal with more than ordinary relish. The general placed me on his right,

and frequently addressed me in terms of familiar playfulness. I felt myself to be a welcome guest at his board, and my spirits consequently rose buoyantly, and to a degree commensurate with their recent depression. The breakfast ended, the party separated, and Albernoz having invited me to his abode (where he informed me a hammock was provided for me), I left the general's quarters in company with my new acquaintance, who quickly began to converse in the most fluent English, and was friendly and communicative.

I was at a loss to reconcile his English idiom with his un-English name, and disclosed to him the difficulty I experienced to construe these conflicting distinctions. He laughed at my embarrassment, and proceeded to inform me that his name was "Arbuthnot," but the Spaniards not finding it of easy pronunciation, he had been yclepped Albernoz, and was always so called.

As we became more friendly, he informed me that he was of Scottish origin, and had been born of Protestant parents. He had had, however, a grandmother who was a rigid Catholic, and she, conceiving a special interest in him as a child, had importuned his family to allow his visit to her. Her sectarian zeal led her to conceive an earnest desire to snatch the boy from the heresy of his parents, and she con-

sequently sent him secretly to Spain, and concocted a tale to account for his absence. He was, as a boy, located in a convent, when the war of independence broke out, and Arbuthnot, disdaining the dronish profession for which he was designed, burned to take arms in the absorbing cause, and bursting from the restraints of a monastery, entered the army. He was a kind, good fellow, and we became fast friends. Before I left the country I heard of his advancement to the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

On one occasion, during my stay with General Morillo, I left the dinner table with Arbuthnot, and we were sauntering along, when on turning an angle of the hamlet, we suddenly heard a fusillade, and the abrupt turn disclosed the prostrate body of a creole, just shot for some political offence. I received a severe shock from this unlooked-for incident, knowing full well how narrowly I had escaped a similar fate.

I had passed some eight days at the head-quarters of General Morillo, dining and breakfasting at his well furnished board, until at length the time had arrived for my departure. I ate my last breakfast with him, and prepared to take leave, when utterance failed me, and I was compelled to ask Arbuthnot, in English, to express to the general my thanks for his generous treatment of me. I was really affected, and could not speak my gratitude. Arbuthnot com-

municated my sentiments to the general, who, looking at me complacently, exclaimed, "*se conoce siempre hombre de bien de su cara*" ("a man of worth is always recognised by his face"). He immediately desired Arbuthnot to ask me, "why I had come out to that country? What had the Spaniards done to excite my hostility?" I promptly answered "nothing," and proceeded to inform him that I had so earnestly read the travels of Cortes, Ulloa, and Humboldt, that I had conceived an anxious desire to visit countries so celebrated, and had accordingly joined an expedition which promised to gratify such an aspiration. He appeared to be quite satisfied with my answer, and remarked "it is very natural."

Thus I parted from Morillo, whose passport conferred upon me the advantages and allowances of a Spanish captain. Don Pablo Morillo, at this time forty-eight years of age, was a man of plebeian origin, who at the outbreak of the Spanish war of independence was a serjeant of marines. He rose, by meritorious service, to the grade of Alferez, corresponding with that of ensign in the British army, and first distinguished himself by organising a number of peasants, uniting them with a few soldiers, and leading them to the attack of a French force, which occupied Vigo and its vicinity. So irresistible was the assault of Morillo, that the French retreated precipitately,

closely pursued by the Spaniards, and were only saved from capture by a hasty rush across the bridge, which they partially burnt, and thus eluded their pursuers.

Morillo invested the town, and summoned the French force to surrender; but he received an intimation from the French commandant (who must have been reduced to extremities) that he was precluded from a surrender by the absence of an officer of adequate rank to receive his capitulation. Thereupon, Morillo assumed the dress of a Spanish lieutenant-colonel, and notified the readiness of "Colonel Morillo" to treat with the French commander. By this stratagem, the enemy were induced to lay down their arms; and the town and port of Vigo fell into the hands of the allies, at a time when the capture was deemed of great advantage to the cause. Morillo reported to the Provisional Government the success of his operations, and the means whereby it had been achieved; and he was not only highly eulogised for his tact and presence of mind, but authorised to retain permanently the rank he had assumed.

Thus advanced, and with a character for courage and promptitude, he at length was found commanding the Spanish brigade of troops attached to the division of the late Lord Hill, in the Peninsula; and appears to have been the only Spanish commander acting in

concert with the British, who was disposed to imitate a discipline which far outstripped that of his own nation.

It was impossible subsequently to observe the regiment of Valançay, serving with Morillo in South America, without perceiving how faithfully he had engrafted upon it the smartness and efficiency of our national tactics. The regiment of Valançay would compete in appearance and drill with the British 43rd Light Infantry, certainly the most perfect regiment I ever saw under arms.

At the termination of the Peninsular campaign, when Spain had leisure to contemplate the pacification (to use her own language) of the revolted colonies, General Morillo was selected to command a force amounting (as he himself informed me) to 14,000 men; and he sailed (as Arbuthnot affirmed) to test a mild and redeeming policy, which, I believe, was congenial with his disposition.

It was, however, easier for the mother country thus late to decree such a change in her policy than to effect it. The horrors first introduced by the Spaniards had caused a frightful retaliation, and all the bad passions that could inflame the human mind had been infused into the contest, until no wild beasts could more thirst for blood than did the contending parties in this embittered strife. Language

is quite unequal to describe the hatred and exasperation that agitated both belligerents; and Morillo soon found himself powerless to assuage the all-prevailing ferocity. He was therefore compelled (according to Arbuthnot, who appeared, in discussing these subjects, to speak with candour and moderation) to carry on the war upon the sanguinary principles which had so long prevailed.

I can vouch, however, that the English merchants, the North Americans, and the most respectable natives living under the Spanish rule, concurred in ascribing to Morillo many excellent qualities. I have no doubt that his urbanity, and natural love of justice prevented the defection of vast numbers of the natives, and imparted comparative solidity to the Spanish rule, which the political circumstances of Europe rendered ultimately unavailing.

For the operations resulting in the reduction of Carthagena, he was created Count of Carthagena, and his arms, engraved on the passport now in my possession (which authorised my return from Pao to La Guayra) contains in the foreground the broken bridge of Vigo, and, in perspective, the city of Carthagena.

Morillo, having left the army under the command of General La Torre, returned to Spain before the termination of the struggle. He subsequently com-

manded the Constitutional army opposed to Ferdinand, and to the French under the Duke D'Angoulême in 1823, but was superseded upon some vague charge of supineness, attributable rather, as he and his adherents affirmed, to the exhaustion of the national treasury. He died in peaceful retirement, some few years afterwards.

While at Pao, I had been the object of unlimited curiosity. Arbuthnot's quarters were besieged by inquisitive crowds, anxious to secure a sight of me. In those days of internal interdiction, an Englishman was a *rara avis*, and I became a sight of strange wonderment. I went forth at bidding, conversed with groups of starers, and listened with amusement to the numerous comments upon my features and unusual accent. Shortly afterwards, on my progress to Caraccas, I entered a shop in Tocuito, and asked for some cigars. "Who are you?" inquired the vendor; "you neither dress nor speak as we do." "I am an Englishman," I replied. "An Englishman!" exclaimed the bourgeois with astonishment, and hastening to a door opening upon a staircase, he shouted out the names of his wife and numerous children, and begged "*por la misericordia de Dios*" that they would come down and see an Englishman. Down hastily ran some half-dozen of his family, and I underwent the ordeal of a rigid scrutiny.

Quitting the head-quarters of Morillo, I proceeded coastward under the guidance of a muleteer, whose mule bore my baggage while I bestrode another mule, which proved a safe conductor over the terrible mountain. This I traversed in the company of a detachment of Spanish cavalry in safety.

At Carabobo I passed the night at one of the three habitations on that vast plain, at the *venta*, a general store and house of entertainment combined, kept by the *teniente de justicia*, or justice of the peace for that district. I called freely for what I wanted, and in the morning demanded my bill. "You owe me nothing," said the host, with the happiest expression of countenance; "you are a stranger in this country, and are welcome; when I go to your country, you will repay me." Let the cynic rail against mankind, it is astonishing how frequently I experienced human sympathy.

Journeying onwards, I regained the town of Maracay, and once more became the guest of the humane commandant, from whose family I received a cordial welcome, and many congratulations upon my improved appearance since the possible doom of death had vanished from my apprehension.

The vicinity of Maracay having enjoyed the prestige of superior fertility, even in that vale of unrivalled fruition, I resolved to make its circuit.

Oranges, lemons, limes, and sweet limes (the last, to my taste, a flat and insipid fruit) abounded, and loaded the atmosphere with their fragrance; while contiguous lands teemed with produce. Here I observed numerous gardens enclosed with high walls, and recognised a style of European arrangement. The church, a noble edifice, was undergoing repair, and I was assured that the sight of unwonted internal splendour would, in its sacred ministerial integrity, have repaid the curiosity of any stranger.

Bidding a lasting farewell to my benevolent friend, I travelled to Tumero, where I found a large body of troops assembled, and under their charge, as prisoners, Colonel Urslar (who had commanded the German Rifle Corps at Margarita, Barcelona, and Cumana, and whom I had last seen at Maturin), and a young English sub-lieutenant of Devereux's Legion. I was permitted to visit them, and held a long and interesting conversation with an old comrade in adversity, for whose fate I became deeply interested. I had heard of Urslar's capture at Pao, and had been questioned by General Morillo respecting him. The hostile deposition of some few deserters, late of his corps, had much indisposed the General towards him; and as the prisoner was on an inland route, I trembled for his fate, of which, thereafter, I could gain no certain tidings. Urslar, who had served

with the British army in the German Legion, was loud in his denunciation of Patriot incapacity. I quitted these two captives in such hands, under the influence of dejection at their condition, and thankfulness for my own happier prospects.

The treatment poor Urslar had received from the crew of the gun-boat that had captured him on the coast of Margarita, had been far different from mine. He had been stripped naked, bound in that condition to the boat, and exposed to the sun's rays. He was beaten and otherwise maltreated, consigned to prison at Cumana, and sent in irons to La Guayra. There his irons had been struck off, and he was thenceforth considerately treated, receiving an ample pecuniary allowance, and was invited to enter the Royalist service. That proposition he at once rejected; not, as he informed me, from any indisposition to castigate the Independents, but from a regard for his character in Europe. Under those circumstances I left Colonel Urslar a prisoner at Tumero.

In this town I passed the night, by virtue of a billet, at a house occupied by six women, two aged and four younger ones, sisters, and the whole party was afflicted with the goitre.

In journeying from Tumero to Caraccas, I was compelled to pass the night on the summit of the mountains of the Cucuisas. The frost was intense,

and I was destitute of bed or covering; so I suffered accordingly. In the morning I watched the rising sun with ecstasy; and no sooner had he topped the mountains, than I ran to welcome his rays, and to receive the tribute of their warmth.

On the 9th of March I reached the city of Caraccas, was received with distinction by the captain-general, who entertained me at dinner; and after a stay of five days, I once more repaired to La Guayra.

In this inland journey, through a fruitful and well-inhabited district, I had been struck with the devotion generally evinced by the natives to the Royalist cause. General Morillo had assured me of his firm reliance upon them; and their fidelity seemed to me to spring from the more settled and reliable nature of the tenure. Many years had witnessed this fierce struggle, and the exactions consequent upon the occasional success and inroads of the Independents, who had failed to maintain their hold of the choicest provinces, had harassed and exhausted the native population.

Danger to life and property on the resumption of the Royalist sway, operated doubtless to cool their ardour for a cause hitherto so ill sustained. Fear for personal safety, and dread of spoliation made them distrustful of nominal emancipators, while the protracted occupation of the rich provinces by the

Spaniards seemed to offer a substantiality which the other party might disturb, but could not ensure for their own rule. I therefore became impressed with the dominant prospects of the king's cause, and more particularly when I beheld under his banner troops far superior in appearance and discipline to those of old Spain. Morillo's experience with the army of the Duke of Wellington had imbued him with military notions far more advanced than those of his countrymen generally; and hence the secret of the bearing of the troops under his command.

Events, however, in the mother country, where Ferdinand's vile policy had been unravelled, and had excited fresh rebellion, did more to advance the liberating cause than the unassisted prowess of the Patriots might have accomplished. The Royalists had long been expecting reinforcements from Spain, until at length the wreck of all such hopes paralysed their exertions, and emboldened the efforts of their enemies. The gradual extinction of Spanish supremacy ensued, and bit by bit the Patriots encroached, and ultimately triumphed.

It became a singular feature in this waning contest to see Morillo and Bolivar, during the process of negotiation, passing the night together in the same room; and, as a result, they ultimately agreed to conduct the war upon civilised principles.

I remained at La Guayra nearly six weeks, receiving during that time the pay, reduced as it was by the impoverished state of the exchequer, of a Spanish captain. I enjoyed by special invitation the hospitality of a merchant, Don Esteben Escobar; at whose house I daily breakfasted and dined, in company with an English merchant named Roche. My principal associates were the British and American merchants, whom I have antecedently noticed; and I had the privilege to attend the tertulias of a native family, where music formed the main attraction. The piano and guitar were the instruments in use, and some few native ladies sang with taste and sweetness.

Thus recompensed for previous toil and danger, I freely threaded this uneven town, climbed the heights by the crumbling tortuous wall, leading to fortifications shattered by the terrible earthquake of 1812; and I bathed daily in a mountain stream which flowed gently down a steep rocky course, presenting occasionally cascades which it was refreshing to stand under, and thus enjoy a luxurious natural shower-bath.

Of course I did not neglect to visit my late prison; and, while standing near that spot, I happily solved a problem which had greatly excited my curiosity. During my twelve days' incarceration, I had constantly heard, throughout each day, a shrill female

voice shouting out "*Juan de Dios*," the Spanish term for John the Baptist. So incessantly had this cry assailed my ear, that I became not a little anxious to learn who this personage could be.

Fortunately for me, as I stood gazing at my quondam prison-house, I heard the well-known summons, and beheld a little naked black boy, who ran with amazing agility to answer it. The elucidation of this mystery greatly amused me, and I eyed the Baptist's representative with marvel at the strange nomenclature,—here and elsewhere ransacked to suit the negro race.

On the 23rd of April, 1820, I was suddenly informed that a British ship of war was at anchor in the bay, and that the captain had been seen to land and direct his steps to the commandant's house. With eager haste I sought him out, and solicited a passage to some West India island.

A short colloquy sufficed to ensure his assent, and my passport having been promptly endorsed, I could only take a hasty leave of a friend or two, and within two hours' time I was once more afloat and under sail for the Danish island of St. Thomas, in His Majesty's ship Salisbury, of fifty guns, commanded by Captain John Wilson.

CHAP. XIX.

HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP SALISBURY. — HER OFFICERS — SCENES IN THE GUN-ROOM. — ST. THOMAS. — AN INTRODUCTION. — DEPRESSION. — GENEROSITY OF A SPANIARD. — SAIL FROM ST. THOMAS. — A FORTUNATE FRENCH SOLDIER. — AZORES — SHOAL OF WHALES. — QUARANTINE. — BOURDEAUX. — OVERLAND TO PARIS AND BOULOGNE. — ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND.

ARRIVED on board the Salisbury, I found the first lieutenant, Mr. Blackman (son of Sir George Blackman, Bart., who subsequently assumed the name of Harneage), to be an acquaintance whom I had often met at the house of the Rev. Dr. Grindlay, in London. He greeted me most kindly, and, learning my adventures, proffered any amount of service in his power. I accepted the loan of 10*l*., declining his handsome offer to endorse my bill upon England, because I was doubtful, after the passing of the Foreign Enlistment Act, what might have been the fate of my half-pay, then my only resource. The Act, however, was not made retrospective, and my slender retirement was secure.

Mr. Blackman was known to be a man of property, and his guaranty was respected in the islands visited by the Salisbury. Nothing, however, would have

induced me to subject his generosity to so ill a requital as the possible dishonour of a bill which he had endorsed.

I was entertained by the officers in the ward-room, free of expense, and I received the most considerate attention from them all.

The mates and midshipmen often invited me into the gun-room to see, in their own facetious terms, "the future admirals of England;" and I became familiar with the incessant fun and frolic of that most humorous class. Boisterous mirth and endless roars of laughter prevailed amongst them, and the sedatest stoic must have "split his sides" in contemplating the scenes, and listening to the sallies in that gun-room.

The Captain, John Wilson, who did not come up to their mark in suavity, was termed "John Wilson *Croaker*," John Wilson "*Croker*" then filling the post of Secretary to the Admiralty. The leader in all this pastime was a stout middy about twenty years of age, named Henry Saunders, whose countenance beamed with arch humour, and displayed an everlasting grin. One day, as I descended, they were all seated round the table, when a wag shouted out, "Dispatches, of which the following is a copy, were received at the Admiralty from Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Saunders, G.C.B." The sally produced a

universal roar, and at that moment the sailor who waited upon this wild company entered, bearing a huge dish of hot Irish stew.

The joke, and its reception, tickled the fellow's fancy, and he laughed so immoderately as to endanger at once his own perpendicular, and the dish he was carrying. Three or four middies shouted out "scaldings," and rushed from the table to save themselves. This made the fellow laugh the more, and down with awkward acceleration came the dish upon the end of the table, endangered certainly, but not a drop of the gravy spilt. The "bravos" that succeeded this feat, and the peals of laughter that followed it were irresistibly comical, and, to add to it, there stood the tar, laughing as loud and as long as his young masters. That sailor by his ceaseless relish of jokes, and the eternal broad grin upon his countenance, seemed to me to have been appropriately selected, from the whole family of mankind, for the post he filled. Never was a fellow more suited to a situation.

I have ever since retained freshly in my memory the unspeakable drollery of the scenes I witnessed in that gun-room, and I can vouch, from practical experience, for the well-merited reputation of midshipmen for every species of fun and waggery.

A circuitous cruise brought us in eight days to

the anchorage of St. Thomas, whose spacious bay was equal to contain the navies of the world. As a free port, it was the resort of outcasts and adventurers of all climes and colours. Every nefarious species of commerce there found its representatives; and although there were many legitimate traders and merchants, there was likewise as wide a sprinkling of freebooters as any spot in the known world could number.

The town was built upon three hills, and was composed chiefly of wood tenements, while the island generally was blank, barren, and devoid of water. The ruins of two towers pointed to the foregone prowess of the formidable buccaneers.

Taking leave of my hospitable naval patrons, I landed at St. Thomas, waited upon the Danish governor, Von Scholten, and proceeded to deliver a letter of introduction to the firm of King and Co., the principal merchants of the island. I had been furnished with that letter at La Guayra, by a merchant named Harrison, who described the firm as his "friends." Mr. King, the principal partner, perused my letter, looked dark and unutterable things, and, without a word of explanation, suddenly left me to digest his reception. Hardly conscious of the import of his bearing, I waited some minutes; but, finding I was allowed to stand unnoticed, I took my de-

parture. I subsequently learned, by accident, that Mr. Harrison had failed in business, and had quitted St. Thomas very considerably in debt to King and Co., who resented his unauthorised freedom in intruding his acquaintances upon them. When I learned that fact, I only regretted that Mr. King had not considerately apprized me of the circumstance: it would have spared my feelings, while it justified their repudiation of Harrison's introduction.

This untoward incident affected my spirits, and I paced the streets of St. Thomas under the pressure of mournful forebodings. I seemed to be thus made fully sensible of my forlorn condition, and sauntered, brooding over prospective trials. In this dejected frame of mind I was suddenly accosted by name, and found myself addressed by a Spanish gentleman, Don Manuel Uhagon, whom I had sometimes met at the house of Don Esteben Escobar, in La Guayra. This young man had resided during three years in England, was much attached to the English, and had made himself especially acquainted with the feats of British naval heroes. He was a native of Bilboa, where his father and brothers were merchants of good repute; Don Manuel had sailed from Biscay in one of his father's vessels, with a view to visit Caraccas, and was then on his return to Europe by whatever conveyance he might find.

In the most friendly accents he inquired where I was going? My reply was, to England, if I could get there; but by what means I was at a loss to divine. "You shall go with me by the packet," said he (she was then at anchor in the harbour), but I told him the thing was impossible, for I had not wherewithal to defray the passage. Without a moment's hesitation he exclaimed, "Oh, never mind that, I will pay for you with pleasure!" Struck with amazement at so generous an offer, and from such a quarter (for that young man knew full well that I had borne arms against his own nation), I was quite at a loss to express my grateful sentiments. I did, however, stammer out my thanks, and Senor Uhagon left me, with an appointment to meet again, while he went off, if possible, to secure our berths. He returned with the intelligence that not a berth was procurable, and forthwith set himself to seek out the first vessel bound to Europe. He found a Norwegian brig, "the Boroen," about to sail for Bordeaux, bargained for a passage, and paid the requisite sum for himself and for me. Here was an escape, as singular as providential, from impending misery; and again had the guiding hand of Heaven interposed to snatch me from unhappiness.

I repaired with my preserver to a boarding-house, kept by one Levi, where abundant comfort was my

daily portion. We consumed the intervening time in exploring the immediate vicinity of the town, and in watching for and assailing land crabs. Thus I became cognisant of the habits and swift movements of these crustaceous animals. Their locality resembled a rabbit warren; their holes were of the like description, and their motions as cautious and rapid as those of the coney.

On the 15th May, 1820, we sailed from St. Thomas in the "Boroen." We found several fellow-passengers on board, and one a Frenchman named Daumergue, whose history deserves to be recorded. He was a man of good appearance and address, about forty years of age, and was an enthusiastic Buonapartist. He had served, ultimately as a serjeant, in the French army, and had amassed a small sum of money, with which he had sailed to the Pacific. It had been his intention either to enter the patriot army, or to engage in commerce, as either prospect might appear encouraging. While at Buenos Ayres he sauntered into a room, where the cargo of a captured Spanish vessel was under sale by auction. There he casually bid for two cases of cotton prints, which were knocked down to him. Doubtful whether he had done right or wrong, he determined to open and thoroughly examine his purchase, ere he re-offered it for sale. This fortunate resolution repaid him by a singular

discovery. One of these packages contained a considerable hoard of diamonds, placed there doubtless for some contraband speculation; and Daumergue, by this lucky adventure, became (for one in his station) a wealthy man. He was returning to France, designing thenceforth to live upon the means fortune had so capriciously bestowed upon him.

I have said that he was an enthusiastic Buonapartist. During the voyage, an argument arose between him and me as to the comparative merits of English and French chiefs; when, speaking of Napoleon, he exclaimed with enthusiasm, "Monsieur, vous n'aviez pas, chez vous, un homme digne de cirer ses souliers!"

He was a good fellow at heart; and, ere we parted at Bordeaux, he gave us a champagne dinner, of a kind to impress us with his liberality. We reached the Gironde with but one very remarkable occurrence. On a bright afternoon in the neighbourhood of the Azores, we were startled by the sudden apparition of a countless multitude of whales. The blowing and spouting of these monsters, ahead, astern, and around us, created intense excitement. The shoal was so numerous as to defy computation; and our Captain (Christopherson) a sailor from his boyhood, declared emphatically that he had never witnessed such a sight before. He was so thunderstruck that he exclaimed,

"it is useless for us to affirm we have seen such a sight; we shall not be believed." Whales were known to frequent this part of the ocean; and the North American whalers often took a circuitous course, under the hope of there securing their first fish.

We sailed up the Garoune to Pauliac, and there performed a quarantine of eighteen days. This tedious imprisonment ended, we further sailed up to Bordeaux, where all the enticements of the beautiful city made us conscious of a European existence.

There I staid ten days, the guest, at an hotel, of my generous Spanish friend, who calculated my expenses to England by an overland route, and supplied me with the requisite funds. I started by diligence for Paris. The route so well known was traversed and overcome by a tax upon our patience, which cannot in these days of railroad expedition be tested. We stopped in localities of capricious distance, and waited for hours without assignable reason. Here we arrived at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and resumed our route at seven in the evening. Again we arrived at seven in the evening, and re-entered the vehicle at eleven o'clock at night. Thus were we frequently retarded and tantalized until we reached Orleans, where a halt of six hours, for the last time, enabled us to view the public objects of that interesting city.

At the inn an agent of the police came, both to inspect our passports, and to scan our persons. I shall never forget that lynx-eyed functionary. He looked me over from top to toe, and my coat (the eleemosynary contribution of a charitable friend after my capture in South America), not fitting according to approved style, seemed to fix his suspicious attention. I was quite aware of my faulty attire, and was consequently disturbed by his gaze. However I passed muster, and saw no more, and heard no more of my scrutator.

We journeyed from Orleans to Paris in a double bodied vehicle upon two wheels, of cart-like dimensions, and were from time to time disturbed by the conducteur, who begged us to shift and trim to preserve the equilibrium of that strange carriage. These arrangements, now happily obsolete, are calculated to excite surprise; but such was the accommodation of that day.

We entered Paris by the Barrier de l'Enfer, at seven o'clock in the morning, and after looking about that far-famed capital, counting my money (now becoming nearly exhausted) at every step, I suddenly determined to make for the coast, and found most conveniently a diligence about to start for Boulogne and Calais. Arrived at the former place, I beheld agents inviting us to sail for Dover forthwith,

and there I alighted and embarked, and in a few hours landed at Dover. My cash was so much reduced that it needed no further counting, and calculating the cost of my bed (supper being out of the question), I expended a penny upon a biscuit, and retired to rest.

In the morning I was compelled to consider breakfast an unnecessary meal, and paying for my bed, I set off at seven in the morning, with half a crown and fourpence in my pocket. Again did a biscuit suffice me for breakfast, and I strode away, *à grand pas,* for Chatham, where I had a brother in the victualling office of that port. After walking twenty miles, occasionally resting on a gate, and ruminating upon past adventures, I became footsore and wearied, and began to halt more frequently, and to sit longer in a reflective mood. At length I saw the well arranged chairs of a road-side house, and longed for rest and refreshment. I happened to be the only guest, and was waited upon by a tidy matron, who perceived my exhaustion and looked earnestly at me. I asked for a glass of ale, and drank it with avidity. "Ah! sir," she exclaimed, "you are not accustomed to travel in this manner." There was a charity in her tone which invoked confidence, and in a few words I informed her of my circumstances. On hearing that my destination was Chatham, she re-

commended "a returned post-chaise" (does anybody, now a days, comprehend the convenience?) and she told me they were constantly passing. My solitary half-crown was all I had to offer, and consequently I demurred; but while I was involved in the abstruse calculation, a returning chaise came up, and I ventured to inquire the cost of a lift to Chatham, to which place I learned the chaise was bound. Five shillings were demanded, and I turned away in despair. "What will you give?" asked the driver, and my last remaining coin was named. The offer was accepted and in I jumped, and found myself seated by a gentleman who politely addressed me.

What could I talk of but South America, and the host of incidents connected with my adventure? It singularly chanced that my companion had a nephew, who had sailed from England with English's legion, and with whom I had been well acquainted. That discovery made us prompt friends, and when we arrived at a large inn, at which the driver designed to rest and refresh his horses, my companion put this most interesting question to me, "Will you do me the pleasure, sir, to take tea with me here?" The proposition exactly suited my condition, and gladly assenting, my lips once more smacked the flavour of an English cup of tea.

This was the crowning instance of adventitious.

aid which had so often in my chequered career ministered to my necessities when all appeared hopeless and unprofitable. It impressed me with the singular interposition which, under deep distress and divers circumstances, had snatched me from overshadowing evil.

In due time I arrived at the Chest Arms in Chatham, where my brother's name insured me a bed and every requisite attention.

I depended upon my brother for a supply of cash; but to my discomfort I learned that he was gone to London. A Samaritan of the same office tendered me a sufficient loan; and, thus replenished, I repaired to town.

CHAP. XX.

WELCOME OF FRIENDS. — REPLENISHED COFFER. — AILMENTS. — AUTHORSHIP. — NEW VIEWS OF LIFE. — APPLICATION. — A NEW PROPOSITION — ITS REJECTION, AND SUBSEQUENT ADOPTION.

I FOUND that, until the very recent receipt of a letter from me, my relatives had considered me to be lost. They were thinking of putting on mourning for my no longer doubted death, since by some chance they had heard of the extremity to which sickness had reduced me. I was therefore received with the affectionate warmth with which something analogous to resurrection had inspired them.

I not only was petted by my family, but I found in the hands of the agents all my arrear of half-pay; and I was consequently endowed with funds which made me comparatively rich.

In the first instance I divided my time by visits to provincial friends, and exhausted some weeks in an agreeable round of pleasure. Time crept on, and with it the realities of life daily became more obvious, and my own exertions in some shape more imperative. How or where I should seek advancement, became questions of reflective moment, and I thought.

and sighed over schemes of promise only to be bewildered and discouraged.

Moreover, I found my frame to have received a shock which active exertion made hourly manifest; and I could no longer conceal that the wear and tear of the tropics, and the excessive sufferings of my late course, had entailed physical consequences of a most depressing character. I became wofully attenuated, strength and condition forsook me, and swelling of the legs and feet followed any unusual exercise. These symptoms affected my mind; I became dispirited, and despaired of my capacity to struggle with the world.

On speaking one day with a friend in a tone of deep despondency, he employed various arguments to divert my melancholy, and proposed two courses for prompt adoption. First, he suggested that I should publish some narrative of my adventures, which he hopefully predicted would furnish me with funds; and, secondly, that I should "brush up my classics" and seek to enter the Church.

To the first proposition I yielded a ready assent, and forthwith applied myself to the task. The second was not rejected; but, as my means were scanty, I doubted its practicability. However, I snatched up elementary books, and applied myself slightly to their study.

I did write a narrative, which was published by Arch and Co. of Cornhill, and by it I realised some forty pounds. It was a crude and ill-written production, the first effort of a very young man, who remembered only his wrongs, and wrote as a disappointed partisan. I was not in the temper to take an enlarged view of the struggle; and now, in the language of Churchill, I "curse the line where candour was forgot."

Strange to say it was favourably reviewed, and served to introduce me to the late Rev. Thomas Rennell, an eminent scholar, and Christian Advocate to the University of Cambridge, who promised his exertions to induct me into the Church without the expense of a degree.

I was a frequent visitor to my inestimable friend Viscountess Perceval, who not very long after my arrival in England became Countess of Egmont. She retained all her noble qualities, and her heart was ever inclined to counsel and assist. Unhappily she became a martyr to neuralgia, which completely bereft her of comfort, and ultimately accelerated her death. In her, society lost one of the most beneficent, and the least selfish of those of her high station. May her spirit rest in peace!

So soon as my mind became fully occupied, my health improved, and after a stay of three months in

Devonshire, I took Mr. Rennell's advice to "put my pride in my pocket," and made varied exertions to improve my resources.

Some of my pursuits were quite ungenial to my taste, and at first I toiled with painful unwillingness; but the more I applied the less reluctant I became; and I cannot but regard that period of my life as really the most honourable of my whole career.

I taught in various ways: I wrote gratuitously for two weekly newspapers, and for the "County Herald" for a weekly stipend. I made extensive translations of Spanish documents; and for those necessary to one lawsuit gained, by this means, within one year, a sum so large as to attest my indefatigability. I was also engaged to translate into English a constitution designed for Mexico. I managed the transactions of a provident institution; and, moreover, devoted every leisure moment, under a competent instructor, to Latin and Greek, with a view to ordination. I detail these circumstances because, on retrospection, I deem them to have been creditable to my industry and perseverance, and worthy the imitation of young men of doubtful prospects.

Mr. Rennell died prematurely at the precise period when I had hoped for his promised services. This proved a great discouragement to me; but my exer-

tions were not relaxed, and I laboured with undefined hope.

Like many others, devoid of competent means, I married; but as I am not desirous to obtrude my private affairs upon public patience further than they may tend to unfold public objects, I shall merely observe that my wife was well educated, and possessed some accomplishments.

I still pursued the even tenor of my way, and under special counsel entered myself at St. John's College, Cambridge, when my future course became singularly diverted.

I was strongly advised to emigrate to Canada in holy orders, where my acquaintance with the French language would, it was affirmed, make me a welcome clergyman. On inquiry I found this step might be accomplished; and, favoured by the late Archdeacon Pott with a letter to the Bishop's chaplain, I received, in March 1829, encouragement to present myself for examination in the ensuing month of October.

Thus resolved, I was pursuing my studies; and one morning in particular was poring over Greek, when in walked the late Rev. John Ousby, at that time chaplain to the Middlesex House of Correction (with whom I had long been reading), and in jocular strain he said, "I am come to drag you to prison."

He proceeded hastily to inform me, that having been casually present the day before in the court at Clerkenwell, he had there learned the determination of the magistrates to insist upon the resignation of Mr. Vickery, the governor of the prison at Cold Bath Fields. So many had been the complaints of his management, that at length his removal, voluntary or compulsory, appeared indispensable.

Mr. Ousby detailed to me the sentiments expressed by Mr. Serjeant Pell (then an influential magistrate), who insisted that a great mistake had long been made in assigning such an important post to a mere police officer. He urged, on the contrary, that the governor of such a prison should be a gentleman, and that it was desirable he should be a military or naval officer, who combined education with habits of business.

This was the sum of Mr. Ousby's communication; he was pleased, however, to add, that he thought I was the very man thus sketched out by Mr. Serjeant Pell.

I listened to this strange proposition with ill-disguised aversion, and promptly observed that I knew nothing of prisons (I was not then aware that, considering the prevailing mismanagement of that period, happy was he who did not), that I had no acquaintance with the magistrates, no influence to exert, and

consequently no success to anticipate. My friend replied that he thought there would be a fair contest, to be decided by the qualifications of the candidates; and he only begged of me to consult my friends, and to allow myself twenty-four hours for a decision. That I promised, and he took his departure.

In the course of that very day I sought the advice of three or four influential gentlemen, all of whom, after quiet reasoning, recommended me to make the attempt. I ascertained that a failure would not prove a bar to my original design, seeing there was nothing unworthy in the experiment.

No sooner was it determined that I should venture upon this undertaking than, casting aside my books, I canvassed with ceaseless energy. First, however, it was indispensable that I should collect the requisite testimonials; and the first person to whom my mind reverted was Colonel Sir Alexander Dickson, at that time Adjutant-General of the Royal Artillery. I consequently repaired to Woolwich to seek him out; and arriving about 11 o'clock A.M., I met him just emerging from the arsenal, dressed in full uniform, and wearing many orders.

I had not seen him for years; still he instantly knew me, uttered an exclamation of surprise, and extending his hand he said, "This is a most extraordinary coincidence; I sat up till two o'clock this

morning to read your narrative, and now here I meet you!"

My errand was soon disclosed, and Sir Alexander forthwith promised to send me by post, in his own words, "the best testimonial his pen could trace." He did so; and as it testified to services which I have recorded, and was a most eulogistic document, I felt no little pride that a man of Sir Alexander Dickson's eminence should have so flatteringly recorded his estimate of my deserts.

I procured from every other available quarter the required credentials, and amassed sufficient to attest my fitness for the post I coveted. Traversing the length and breadth of the county, I visited every locality in which a magistrate resided, and, with one solitary exception, experienced the utmost courtesy. I found the circumstances of the contest to stand thus:—the police magistrates of that day clung to the privilege, heretofore conceded to them, of selecting the required functionary, and adhered with tenacity to a sort of prescriptive right. There were, even amongst that body, a few dissentients; but the majority sternly resented any departure from a long recognised rule.

The county magistrates, on the contrary, principally at the instance of the late honoured Samuel Hoare, had experienced the unfitness of the class

hitherto patronised, and determined to exert their influence to divert the choice. Consequently, there sprung up a tacit combination to effect a change.

An understanding prevailed, that so soon as the most approved candidate should be determined upon, all individual partiality should give way, and the whole force be united to secure the success of the favoured aspirant. That plan was acted upon, and proved successful.

My canvass progressed favourably, but I failed to extort a single promise. At length, all the candidates were warned to appear before a preliminary committee, to be seen and questioned, and to have their testimonials examined. I look back upon that occasion with satisfaction (considering the period, and the change proposed), at the perfect kindliness with which the contending parties met. There were antagonists of various callings,—military, naval, men of law, a high constable, and the police officer, Plank, the selected of the then existing police "offices." All, however, exhibited the best temper, and nothing like angry rivalry prevailed. I had the good fortune to be preferred by the active county magistrates, and thenceforth no doubt existed of my election.

On the 23rd July, 1829, I was nominated to the post by a vast majority of votes, and the crowd assembled in the court and purlieus of Clerkenwell

Green exceeded anything I have ever since seen, so much was public interest excited by the contest.

On the following day I first visited the prison as governor, and on the 27th was invested by the visiting magistrates with the requisite authority.

CHAP. XXI.

THE PRISON.

ALL the prisons of the country, at that period, were in a most disreputable condition. The efforts of Howard, and subsequently of Sir George Paul, had proved unequal to command that sustaining interest in their amelioration which humanity and sound policy alike demanded. The Frys, the Gurneys, and the Hoares, the honoured philanthropists of the day, had failed to awaken a large amount of public sympathy in their labours, but yet they persevered. Still they were quite in the dark as to the wide extent of the mischief, and had but crude notions of the remedies to be applied.

An all-pervading notion then existed, that the grosser immoralities of prisons might be suppressed, but that a danger would attend the enforcement of very stringent regulations to curb and control the criminals of that day. Consequently, nothing seemed to be aimed at but the extinction of some of the most notorious iniquities of the existing system.

Nor was such an opinion altogether without some

shadow of foundation, for the malefactors of that period, through the inefficiency of police regulations, exhibited a brutality, daring, and lawlessness which can scarcely be over-charged.

The police establishments (exclusive of the presiding magistrates and their clerks) were shamefully extortionate and corrupt. A limited number of functionaries constituted the force of each police "office." Inflated with a nominal reputation for astuteness, they moved slowly, and at a high cost to those who sought their services; and were known to accomplish their cleverest feats by a secret combination with the thieves themselves. Every move was determined by the amount of prospective reward; and the most trifling assistance entailed pecuniary sacrifice upon those already despoiled.

I took possession, therefore, of the prison, when the whole machinery betokened the most appalling abuse; and I found every thing around me stamped with iniquity and corruption. The best acquainted with the prison were utterly ignorant of the frightful extent of its demoralization. It is, indeed, melancholy to reflect, that well paid public functionaries should have entered into so unhallowed a combination to enrich themselves, at the cost of all that was humane, or even remotely decent. The procurement of dishonest gains was the only rule, from the late

governor downwards; and, with the exception of one or two officers, too recently appointed to have learned the villanous arcana of the place, all were engaged in a race of frightful enormity.

The picture is hideous but curious, and not the least extraordinary of my experience in life has been derived from my early government of this prison: nor has it been the least consolation of my chequered career to contemplate the service I rendered to humanity by an energy in a righteous cause, which, I may affirm without egotism, won for me the full confidence and support of every magistrate privy to my exertions.

First, however, let me show by example, how ferocious and lawless the thieves of that day actually were. Two individuals, Mr. Edge of Essex Street, and Mr. Fuller of Bethnal Green, had severally prosecuted and convicted two delinquents, the one for burglary, the other for a street robbery from the person. For their exertions to defend their own property, and to aid public justice, they entailed upon themselves the resentment of associated gangs of thieves.

In vain did they appeal for protection to the Home Office, or to Bow Street; there was no organization of police equal to afford them security. Day and night were they the subjects of every

species of attack and annoyance, which even endangered their lives; and from the lips of Mr. Fuller himself I received the relation of his frequent providential escapes from ruffianly assailants, who plotted his destruction.

"I was," said he, "a man of robust frame, but the persecution of those miscreants reduced me to what you now see me (he was fearfully attenuated). I was a thriving medical practitioner, but I was compelled to relinquish my home and to fly from the neighbourhood, and to sacrifice my prospects in order to save my life. The state could afford me no protection, and at length, when I appeared at Bow Street, I was even assailed with insult, in consequence of the frequency of my appeals."

Such was the lawless impunity with which ruffianism stalked abroad, until the late Sir Robert Peel, undismayed by ignorant clamour, established the new police force, and thus greatly fortified public security.

I entered upon my duties, however, before this force was embodied, and consequently my first acquaintance with public depredators disclosed to me all the coarse brutality and desperation of a fraternity rendered more reckless by positive encouragement in the prisons of the country, and in this prison more particularly.

It is impossible for the mind to conceive a spectacle more gross and revolting than the internal economy of this polluted spot. No term can be sufficiently emphatic to denounce the intense and overwhelming wickedness that teemed throughout it. It was in fact a sink of abomination. The great majority of the officers were a cunning, heartless, and extortionate crew, practising every species of duplicity and chicanery. They combined to uphold a system of profligacy, utterly regardless of aught but profit to themselves, and no amount of rascality seemed to sear their consciences.

From one end of the prison to the other, a vast illicit commerce prevailed, at a rate of profit so exorbitant, as none but the most elastic consciences could have devised and sustained.

The law forbade every species of indulgence, and yet there was not one that was not easily purchaseable. The first question asked of a prisoner was, "had he money, or anything convertible into money; or would any friend, if written to, advance him money;" and if the answer were affirmative, then the game of spoliation commenced. In some instances, as much as seven or eight shillings in the pound went to the "turnkey," with a couple of shillings to the yardsman; a prisoner who had purchased his appointment from the turnkey, at a cost of

never less than five pounds, and frequently for more. A fellow, called "the passage-man," would put in a claim for something also, and thus the prison novice would soon discover that he was in a place where fees were exorbitant, and charges multiplied. If he should be singularly untutored in the habits of such society, he would not long retain a vestige of his property; and, if a sense of injustice led him to complain, he was called "a nose," and had to run the gauntlet of the whole yard, by passing through a double file of scoundrels, who, facing inwards, assailed him with short ropes or well knotted handkerchiefs. If, however, he were a swell-mobsman, or a chap who promptly assimilated himself to the ways of nefarious society, he would by a sub-current of traffic (paying tribute to the turnkey) amass in a few months an unusual per-centage upon the money he had invested, either by the agency of usurious dealing, or by unblushing rascality; it mattered not which, provided only the opportunity should occur.

The poor and friendless prisoner was a wretchedly oppressed man. He was kicked and buffeted, made to do any revolting work, dared not complain, and such was the amount of savage usage combined with starvation (for even his prison fare would sometimes be sacrificed to fraud or theft), that timely inter-

vention only saved a few despairing wretches from suicide: for that shocking fact I pledge my word.

Meanwhile, if a magistrate casually visited the prison rapid signals communicated the fact, and he would walk through something like outward order. The doors of cells, opening into eight yards, might be thrown wide open to exhibit clean basements garnished with lime white, and little did the unsuspecting justice divine that almost every cell was hollowed out to constitute a hidden store, where tobacco and pipes, tea and coffee, butter and cheese reposed, safe from inquisitive observation; frequently beside bottles of wine and spirits, fish sauce, and various strange luxuries.

In the evening, when further intrusion was unlooked-for, smoking, and drinking, and singing, the recital of thievish exploits, and every species of demoralizing conversation prevailed. The prisoners slept three in a cell, or in crowded rooms; and no one, whose mind was previously undefiled, could sustain a pure or honest sentiment under a system so frightfully corrupting.

At times I succeeded in acquiring no little curious information by gliding softly through the passages in the evening, and listening to the strange, and for the most part revolting, conversations of the several trios.

Upon one such occasion I found a young man of really honest principles combating against two hardened scoundrels, for the superior advantages of integrity. He was in the prison for theft, but declared that, but for a severe illness which had utterly reduced him, he would never have stolen.

Of course his companions laughed at his scruples, and advocated general spoliation; when, in a tone of indignant remonstrance, the young man said, "surely you would not rob a poor countryman who might arrive in town with merely a few shillings in his pocket!" One of his companions, turning lazily in his crib, and yawning as he did so, exclaimed, "By God Almighty, I'd rob my own father, if I could get a shilling by him!" His fellow vagabond indulged in a loud laugh, and I left them for the night, noting the number of the cell.

On the following day I paraded the three, consigned the two villains to as strict a discipline as I could then command, and learned with some interest the history of the young advocate for probity.

He was a manufacturer of brooms and brushes, which he hawked when he had made them. He informed me that 15*s.* on his discharge would enable him to buy sufficient materials again to pursue his trade, and, on my recital of the facts, the visiting justices kindly presented him with that sum. A

few months afterwards I met him in Hatton Garden, bearing a pole well stocked with brooms and brushes, and with a grateful expression of thanks he declared himself to be a thriving and contented man.

It was, however, impossible to make any humanising progress until I had grappled with and overcome that organised corruption which ministered so incalculably to the gains of the prison officers. The hangers-on, also, the tradesmen's artizans and labourers, by some defined intelligence amongst the functionaries, exercised their traffic also.

By singular accidents, from time to time, I became cognisant of the turnkey's conversations and many of their contrivances, and was informed that the knowing wink of the eye, and the boastful assertion that they "would show me what was what," were constantly employed to notify their mastery over my designs.

But here let me state that I had, in the first instance, enough to do to scan the devious passages of the building, and to glean some faint idea of the general routine. In that attempt I saw so much to shock and to disgust me, that by degrees I became alive to the necessity for some determinate course of action. But how to begin, or whence to seek aid or counsel, naturally puzzled me. I stood alone, a

novice in prison management, opposed by a clique of long-practised corruptionists.

An accidental disclosure afforded me a most valuable ally. A letter came under my eye from a prisoner to his mother, written in a style which denoted not only the educated man, but one so affectionate and disinterested in every sentiment he breathed, that I was curious to see the writer, and consequently sought him out.

He bore the assumed name of "Thompson," was aged, and exhibited strong marks of dissipation in his countenance. His real name was Mozley; he had been an officer in the Indian army, and had reduced himself to beggary by gaming, and ultimately to complete destitution by drink, the result of despair. Still, however, he retained many of the refined feelings of the gentleman, while his devotion to his mother indicated an absence of selfishness quite marvellous in one so degraded.

The sympathy I expressed for the fallen condition of that poor fellow touched his heart, and kindled gratitude towards me. I used daily to notice him amongst his degenerate group; and every fresh development of my pity seemed to make him more visibly my debtor, until at length I intrusted him with my anxious determination to reform the prison. He promptly assented to aid me, and in the most

zealous spirit communicated a multitude of facts, and described to me the characters of most of the turnkeys, disclosing their extortionate schemes, from which he had himself suffered.

As this man's life would not have been safe in the prison had the real nature of our conferences transpired, I was compelled to proceed with great caution. Occasional interviews, and frequent correspondence afforded me many valuable hints, which I improved by visits to the homes of prisoners, where, in most instances, tact and kindness won the confidence of their distressed wives and relatives. Thus assured, they would confide to me the sums of money they had paid, and the sacrifices in various ways they had made in bribing the turnkeys to secure indulgences for the imprisoned.

One poor woman assured me that she had parted with her last farthing, and pawned her last remnant of clothing to satisfy these insatiate wretches, and in the agony of her reflections she exclaimed wildly, "Oh! what monsters those men are; what hearts of stone they possess!" and she unfolded a tale of cruel and remorseless exaction that perfectly aroused my indignation. Happily I got a good case against two of those harpies, and at the next meeting of the visiting justices they were expelled from the prison.

This example, successfully effected by my extended

inquiries, created much alarm, and caused suspicion to alight upon Thompson, my informant. Officers and prisoners alike denounced him, and his safety became doubtful. Many days had not elapsed, ere one evening loud cries were heard from a room containing about thirty prisoners. I was in the garden, and heard them, and rushed with two or three officers, whom I summoned to my aid, in order to ascertain the cause. No sooner was the door open, than there stood Thompson dripping with perspiration, and shaking with terror."

Missiles of various kinds had been hurled at him, and he felt alarmed for his life. Preconcert was manifest in this outrage; for each assailant, as he suddenly started up and threw, instantly laid down, and no one of the offenders could be recognised. I never saw a creature so completely overcome by alarm as Thompson; and the man was withdrawn from the room, actually more dead than alive.

I now found it necessary to place Thompson in a post of safety, and I consequently sent him to the apprentice gallery, a part allotted to refractory apprentices, who were, for a limited period, consigned to separate cells. The turnkey in charge of that division of the prison, was one of the most corrupt of the whole body; but I gave him so strict a charge of Thompson, and threatened such fearful retribution,

should any injury befal him, that my ally became safe.

At that period, I regularly attended the Middlesex Sessions, and was sometimes, for days, engaged in the court, and consequently unable to visit the different compartments of the prison, or to see the whole of my charge.

Upon one of those occasions, poor Thompson missed his patron, and sighed over the lost opportunities of consultation. Writing, therefore, was his only resource, and he composed an epistle of an unusually touching character. He never failed to describe, with his pen, all that he conceived would serve and interest me; and, amidst practical expositions, he mostly contrived to interlard some respectful sentimentalism.

One day he commenced by deploring my daily absence, told me how afflicting it proved to him, and the pen of a "convicted felon" thus, in classical terms, described his emotion — "for I can truly say," continued the writer, "Vultus ubi tuus affulsit captivo, it dies gratior, et soles melius nitent."

To that unhappy man I was mainly indebted for hints that served to stimulate my zeal, and facts that enabled me to grapple with unscrupulous scoundrels. It is no part of my design to trace his history; suffice it to say, he was pardoned for his services, struggled

on with ill-requited hopes of again rising to respectability, and sunk still deeper into the slough of crime and debasement, which early indiscretions had prepared for him. My last sight of that wretched man would indeed "point a moral" too sternly appalling to need farther comment.

Meanwhile my active scrutiny into the hidden transactions of the prison, and the discoveries I made, and the removals I effected, occasioned wide-spread consternation, and excited a spirit of revenge, both in the officers and prisoners, towards me. Anonymous letters, breathing vengeance, poured thickly in; and although they did not deter me from my fixed purpose, they necessarily caused me both anxiety and alarm.

I was admonished by a turnkey that my life was in danger, since the bitterest curses were vented on all sides, and every epithet was applied to me that rage and malice could suggest. Consequently I walked about with loaded pistols in my pocket by day, and slept with the same weapons beside me at night. I neither left the outer gate nor returned to it without a careful survey of the parties about it, and no precaution was wanting on my part to guard against sudden surprise or attack.

My existence consequently, for some months, was one of painful solicitude; but still I can with truth

aver, that my resolution rose in proportion to the difficulties and dangers of my course, and I determined to reform the prison or perish in the effort. I was most effectively encouraged and supported by the visiting committee; and was fortified by their co-operation against many petty annoyances from the supplanted police authorities, whose hostility, in some instances, caused me serious vexation and trouble.

Circumstances at length constrained the resignation of the male chief warder, a functionary whose absence was, in every point of view, devoutly to be wished; and a proposition of mine to seek out an active retired serjeant of artillery to succeed to the vacant post, was hailed with satisfaction, and adopted by the committee.

Thus authorised, I repaired to Woolwich, made known my errand to Sir Alexander Dickson, then Adjutant-General of the Royal Artillery, who, with his usual discernment, selected the very man best suited to the occasion.

Pensioned Serjeant Sims presented to the visiting magistrates the most flattering testimonials from his distinguished patron and other officers, and the acceptance of his services was prompt and unhesitating.

Never were indefatigability and determination more suitably united than in Serjeant Sims; and I

soon found that I had a coadjutor so zealous and fearless, that nothing could much longer resist our joint exertions in so good a cause.

A different appropriation of the officers, and numerous suspensions and dismissals amongst them, — the removal of the corrupt "nurses" and "yardsmen," notwithstanding they had paid so exorbitantly for their posts, — unlimited attention to the complaints and statements of oppressed prisoners, and frequent stealthy and unlooked-for visits in places where we were least expected,—all tended to perplex the delinquent functionaries, and to impede their corrupt traffic.

Incessant *émeutes* amongst the prisoners, and, on one occasion, a dangerous mutiny in a felon yard, consisting of at least 100 prisoners, told how greatly they were disposed to resent the encroachments upon their illicit privileges.

Still the work of reform progressed, and in its pursuit we made, step by step, the most marvellous discoveries. There are now three several buildings; at that time there stood but one, together with a large wooden shed for vagrants, which I found in so foul and fetid a condition, that the atmosphere within it was scarcely endurable. A portion of the large building was rudely blocked up to separate the males from the females; but the proximity of

the sexes, especially under such lax government, was most dangerous to the little remaining character the establishment had to lose. However, as I have stated, we discovered, bit by bit, the most monstrous abuses, amongst which the following may be noted. First, the almost daily meeting between the narrow span roofs which then existed, of many of the males and females, who procured that criminal indulgence by the corrupt connivance of certain turnkeys, male and female, well paid for the concession. Meanwhile, any modest girl, or respectable woman, who was herded with that abandoned crew, was treated with indignities too revolting to be lightly credited. Secondly, we found in all sorts of obscure recesses, large stone bottles containing spirits of various kinds; huge jars of sugar, coffee, and even sweatmeats; scores of bottles but lately filled with wine, and a multitude of articles, denoting an extensive trade to indulge the monied prisoners, and to enrich the turnkeys.

The cunning of Lucifer himself was scarcely adequate to detect some of the contrivances to defy official scrutiny; and it was only by the "split" of some prisoner, faithless to his cloth, that we could learn the facts. In addition to the hollowed basements of cells before described, the walls of other cells would appear smooth and unsuspicious, but,

when properly instructed, you might count so many bricks from the right or left, and by methodically removing one or two at the part indicated, the hand might dip into a secret nest, and light upon a rich assortment of choice fluids and varied delicacies. Thirdly, the swell thieves from without would write complimentary notes to certain turnkeys within, and beg their acceptance of some accompanying present. We actually intercepted a small hamper of choice apples from Mr. depredator A. to Mr. turnkey D. (the initials are correctly given) with a note, neatly sealed, to announce the donor. While the turnkey from within would step up to the swell thief from without, shake him cordially by the hand, inquire kindly for what term he was then committed, and promise him all possible attention during his stay. Fourthly, the sub-traffic of the prisoners who had successfully bid for the posts of nurses or yardsmen, was of a very curious description. The search of Mr. Sims and myself one evening, which lasted (to the intense alarm of our wives, whom we found weeping at the porch) from seven till eleven, imparted to us the strangest information. In the beds and paillasses of the infirmary (there were then no sick) we found small papers of tobacco with the charge (most exorbitant) marked upon each; writing paper cut into the smallest saleable sheets, with pens,

pencils, &c. ready for delivery; the money realized by the traffic carefully stowed away; numerous articles, the fruit of barter, consisting of silk handkerchiefs, gloves, stockings, and even children's shoes and women's petticoats. Any thing, in short, convertible into money was received for a morsel of tobacco, or some trifle equally valueless.

Moreover, we captured the trader's ledger, which contained numerous accounts, both settled and unpaid; and we found letters and memoranda which threw much light upon the passing transactions of the prison.

Of course all these researches and disclosures tended to disturb the equanimity of the prison contrabandists, and we vainly hoped we had completely broken up their commerce. The gains, however, of all this chicane were too great to be lightly abandoned, and consequently I found a fresh web of contrivance woven as fast as the last was rent asunder.

I was greatly baffled by the bold front and unblushing hardihood of most of the turnkeys when taxed with any delinquency. The most solemn asseverations were employed, the most holy names invoked, and frightful imprecations were hazarded. When I first heard men declare, "as God was their Saviour and Judge, might they never see the kingdom of Heaven," and even employ terms still

more appalling, I could not conceive it possible that they could be freely uttered to cloak falsehood and knavery. Consequently I was greatly puzzled to arrive at a right conclusion.

A casual occurrence enlightened me on this point also.

It is a singular coincidence in my history that, on the occasion of my first introduction to the family of my wife, I casually mentioned the fact that I had been offered a magistrate's order to visit the prison at Cold Bath Fields. A strong desire was expressed to inspect a prison, and an appointment was consequently made with the family for that object, and Mrs. Chesterton and I visited the prison in company. Upon that occasion we were shown over by a turnkey of very remarkable appearance, to whom I, ignorant of any prohibitory rule, gave half-a-crown, and a gentleman of our party gave him half-a-crown also, in my sight.

On my appointment to be governor I recognised the man at once, and soon learned that he was deeply steeped in all the iniquity of the place. He, however, had preserved no recollection of me, when I received one day the complaint of the chaplain, that B—— (the turnkey in question) had addressed a most impudent remonstrance to a party for the little they had offered him for his trouble in showing them through

the building. As all emolument of that description was forbidden, I called him sternly to account. However, he not only denied the charge, but averred that he had received nothing from the party whatever: "he knew his duty too well." Not satisfied with that disavowal, he went so far as to employ a choice assortment of oaths, such as I have already detailed, in the gratuitous assertion, that "never, since he had been on the establishment, had he ever received one farthing from man, woman, or child, for showing them over the prison."

A new light instantly burst upon me; for, as I myself had given the man money, and saw another do the same thing, I became suddenly aware that either unblushing falsehood, fortified by unscrupulous oaths, or an imaginary trust in mental reservation, were employed to mystify and confound my judgment. I, of course, exposed the fellow's falsehood, reproved him by the exposure of my own experience, and set a close watch upon the scoundrel from that time forth. Ample grounds were soon laid to warrant his dismissal.

This proved to me a most opportune discovery, and relieved me from grave perplexity. Thenceforth I promptly silenced those unprincipled asseverations, and pursued my inquiries unswayed by them.

Amongst the many abuses of the place was one so

absurdly impolitic, that I was lost in amazement to contemplate so mischievous a practice. The philanthropists of that day had advocated a decent supply of clothing to the naked and distressed on their discharge from prison: a recommendation which, exercised with judgment, was both desirable and humane. In this however, as in other matters, salutary discretion was abandoned, and wanton waste encouraged.

The habitués of the prison, after a committal of seven or fourteen days, were, as a matter of course, furnished with good shoes, stockings, and other garments; and, notwithstanding their frequent recommitment (destitute of the benefits so recently lavished upon them), would, in most instances, again emerge with the same prodigal extension of unmerited gifts, while, in point of fact, the pawnbrokers and low slopsellers were the real recipients of such misplaced bounty.

I perceived, at once, the surpassing absurdity of such a practice, which constituted a direct encouragement to the perpetration of petty offences. My expostulation was met by serio-comic remarks (coming from such stewards) upon the cruelty of consigning poor wretches to the streets without a prospect of reformation, owing to their destitute condition: all of which was pathetically true, if such aids had been prudently extended to the poor but hopeful, and not

indiscriminately conferred upon the vicious and hopeless.

I promptly abolished that custom, without, I trust, violating the precepts of Christian benevolence. And as it was also discovered that many an abandoned street-walker would deliberately smash a pane of glass, whenever she desired her linen to be nicely washed and carefully got up, it was ordered by the visiting justices that none should enjoy that advantage unless committed for a period exceeding one month. Thus another incentive to wanton trespass was abolished.

Again, the prison officers helped themselves freely to the prison clothing, which, altered, fitted, and embellished by choice workmen found in the establishment, would hardly be recognised as part of the public stock.

Moreover, the prison dress was conferred upon many, and withheld from others during their imprisonment, upon no intelligible principle. Some did not wish to wear it, and were exempt. Others wore it partially, as suited a capricious taste, and the inmates, consequently, presented a heterogeneous appearance; while in the absence of a fixed and salutary rule upon a very important point of prison management, itch and vermin largely abounded.

Again; the most wilful and wanton destruction of

the prison bedding and clothing prevailed, to the great detriment of the county. There had been, in fact, an utter lack of discipline throughout, and it seemed to be nobody's business to enforce any wholesome rule. All was speculation, waste, and destruction. I instituted a proper inspection of bedding, &c., thoroughly clothed the whole of the inmates, and interdicted the use, by any officer, of the prison property. My progress in all these reforms was weekly reported, and nothing could be more cordial and effective than the support and approval which I received from the visiting magistrates.

It is curious to take a comparative glance at the economical results of all these wholesome measures; and I cite, with no trifling satisfaction, the numbers of prisoners for two terms of seven years, with the contrast in the expenditure for clothing and bedding only:—

From the 30th September, 1822, to Michaelmas, 1829, formed a period of seven years under the old regime, and from 30th September, 1829, to Michaelmas, 1836, the second period under the reformed system.

	Number of Prisoners.	Total cost of Bedding and Clothing.
First period of seven years	35,550	£11,116 9 4
Second period of seven years	66,771	9,871 19 9

showing a diminished expenditure of 1,244*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.* and a comparative saving of 10,507*l.* 5*s.* 4*d.*

In order to exhibit the crying nature of the abuses under the former regime, and in addition to the remarkable fact, that scarcely half the prisoners then wore the prison dress, it must also be noted, that, within the second period, viz. in the years 1832–3, the cholera raged extensively in the prison, prostrating hundreds, and causing fearful mortality. Under medical advice, all the infected bedding and clothing was destroyed by fire, and a great sacrifice of property was the consequence. Notwithstanding, however, this unlooked-for catastrophe, a careful and common sense economy secured this large saving, even under the circumstance of the contracts proving, in the aggregate, slightly against the latter period. It would be tedious to enumerate the wide-spread abuses of this long neglected sink of iniquity, some, indeed, exhibiting the most refined cunning and contrivance; but it may suffice, with the above example, to say, "ex uno disce omnes."

There was one feature in the general *tableau* which much surprised me. While the inmates yielded to evil influences, and the majority resisted all official interposition, shunned communication with me, and made a stand for a vile prescriptive administration, they submitted to a series of exactions of the least tolerable nature. Prisoners, clothed with a sort of conventional importance, by the sums

they had paid for their posts, exercised a pernicious sway in their yards or divisions, and enforced tyrannical rules to an extent scarcely credible at this time. A fellow with a loud voice, and brazen face, would lord it over the subordinate clique with the most aggressive insolence. No man dare approach the fire, indulge in the luxury of a cup of hot water, or enjoy the most contemptible privilege without the permission of the yardsman, or the exaction of a fee of some sort as his perquisite.

Of all the domineering functionaries of that school a bully named B—— (sentenced to one year's imprisonment for fraud) was the most conspicuous. He was a clever, plausible scoundrel, who would lie with imperturbable serenity, and demur and contend, whenever assailed, with a cool impudence and well feigned assumption of innocence that few could imitate. He was one of those semi-educated bravos with whom no single-minded novice could compete. He disputed with me every step, inch by inch, swore by emphatic oaths that would pose a purist, and ultimately (as his time drew short) menaced me me with prospective law in every form.

Nothing could exceed the arbitrary sway which that fellow exercised over the inmates of his yard (then termed the 4th outer), and with such provoking success, that I essayed in vain to shake his

influence amongst the prisoners. He had been tried and sentenced in the court of King's Bench, and craftily assumed a dignity, based upon the superior tribunal that had condemned him (of which he boasted incessantly); and, in spite of my efforts, he all but triumphed over me by an assumption of superiority and importance which really imposed upon the ignorant by whom he was surrounded.

At length he was discharged, and departed for the west of England, whence he played me off a trick which was truly characteristic of the man. I one day received a heavy box from Falmouth marked "game," for which I paid as "carriage" 4*s.* 6*d.* I was astonished at its weight, but opened it carefully in the presence of my wife, and found it to contain stones carefully wrapped in hay, together with half a dozen dead chaffinches, and a note in the well known writing of my late tormentor, hoping I "should enjoy the roast."

By degrees we enforced all the order practicable under circumstances so unfavourable to discipline, viz. crowded wards, with the free privilege of speech amongst abandoned crowds; the necessity, from lack of accommodation, to sleep three in a cell, or in rooms; the absence of any employment for those not sentenced to hard labour, and the retention of some

of the old officers, who were disposed to thwart all attempts at improvement.

Still we believed that we had annihilated the ancient corrupt traffic, when we suddenly discovered a new plan of action, which, to a great extent, had succeeded. "They are too much for me," said the chief warder; "there is tobacco throughout the prison, and I hear of many other things which I cannot detect. I am at a loss to conceive how these things are got in; but the turnkeys are so cunning, that I am fairly beaten by them."

A cautious investigation into circumstances assured me that the chief warder's relation was the truth; and, thus convinced, I resolved to adopt the only practicable course in such an emergency.

I drew up a report for the consideration of the visiting justices, representing the impossibility of reforming abuses without the aid of faithful and willing subordinates; I showed how difficult it was, under a dishonest combination, to obtain proofs of individual guilt, and concluded by denouncing six turnkeys of the old school as men in whom I had not the remotest confidence, but who constituted an impediment to all reform and improvement.

With a copy of that document I waited upon the chairman of the committee, the late Mr. Samuel Hoare; explained to him the necessity for so decided

a step; and had the satisfaction to hear his approval of the course I proposed. At the ensuing meeting of the committee the report was read, and the recommendations were sanctioned and adopted, and a notification was made in January, 1830, to those six turnkeys, that the county desired to dispense with their further services.

From that time forth there was a perfect extinction of the illicit traffic which had so long prevailed, and we were left at liberty gradually to work out improvements which the extension of the building, and other salutary measures greatly facilitated.

Still, pending unlimited communication amongst prisoners, there was an everlasting stimulus to turbulence. The mischievous were always urging on the rash and thoughtless to some excess, and thus entailing upon them, necessarily, punishment. The struggle therefore between rebellion and authority, although invariably terminating in favour of the latter, was productive of serious embarrassment. Indeed, from my recollection of all the turmoil, demoralisation, and revolting exhibitions at that time existing (especially amongst the most vicious of the female prisoners), I contemplate with perfect horror the condition of any prison where unrestricted intercourse prevails.

Considering the period, however, and the lights by which we were then guided, this prison progressed

favourably, attracted much attention, and extorted many encomiums, until the report of the late Mr. Crawford, upon the prisons of the United States, guided public interest on such subjects into an entirely new channel.

Mr. Crawford, who was the intimate friend of the late Mr. Samuel Hoare, had no sooner concluded his able report, than he travelled into the north of England, and, during his excursion, visited certain of the prisons. He returned to London much impressed with the condition of two; viz. that of Wakefield in Yorkshire, and the Bridewell of Glasgow.

At the former the associated silent system had been recently introduced upon the American model under the auspices of a zealous magistrate, who was ably seconded by Mr. Shepherd the governor. At the latter the separate system, accompanied by active and varied industry, was in partial operation, under the late Mr. Brebner, one of the most competent managers of such an establishment the world ever saw.

The practical eye of Mr. Crawford soon discerned the value of these improvements, and he suggested to Mr. Hoare that I should be sent down first to Wakefield, and thence to Glasgow, to see these two systems in operation, and report upon the practicability of applying either to the prison of Cold Bath

Fields. The suggestion of Mr. Crawford was communicated to the visiting justices by Mr. Hoare, who strongly advised its adoption; and consequently, in the month of December, 1834, I set off thus commissioned.

Properly accredited to the authorities of both localities, I received the most serviceable attentions, was freely permitted to make close observations, and had access to every information needful for my purpose. I soon perceived that our lack of cells precluded any trial of the separate discipline, but that a few practicable alterations would enable us to enforce the silent system.

On my return I made a minute report, which was laid before the Court, and subsequently published, *in extenso*, in some of the daily newspapers; and at length the fullest authority was conceded, and our necessary arrangements perfected; and on the 29th December, 1834, the number of 914 prisoners were suddenly apprised that all intercommunication by word, gesture, or sign was prohibited; and without any approach to overt opposition, the silent system became the rule of the prison.

In the first instance it was effected by the employment of monitors, selected by their conduct and intelligence from amongst the prisoners. That practice is now abolished by law, and the change is unquestionably both just and politic; but I cannot

refrain from bearing my testimony to the zealous and efficient exertions of many prisoners elevated to exercise authority, who rendered good service under the conviction of the evils they were assisting to eradicate.

Those who had watched and deplored the former system could not but regard the change with heartfelt satisfaction. There was now a real protection to morals, and it no longer became the reproach of authority that the comparatively innocent were consigned to certain demoralisation and ruin.

For eighteen years has this system been maintained in this prison with unswerving strictness. It has withstood the attacks of the casuist, the prejudiced, and the dogmatical. Indeed, dogmatism is never more intolerant than when stimulated by some vain theory in favour of one darling but exclusive scheme. The close observations of practical men are contemned, and the dreaminess of fanatical imagination heaps obloquy upon experience.

It is not my purpose to refute the sophistries of numerous commentators upon prisons; but I unhesitatingly avow my conviction, that the silent system, properly administered, is calculated to effect as much good as, by any penal process, we can hope to realise.

To the magistrates of this county, many of whom

have devoted so much time and ability to the extension and improvement of the prison, and have evinced an interest in its industrial occupations, — and to the county at large, which has contributed in the course of years so many thousands to extend its utility, — it must be a gratification to receive the ensuing testimonial in its favour.

W. Y ——, aged about 50 years, underwent two years' imprisonment in this House of Correction for forgery. He had, until his unhappy conviction, been in the position of a gentleman, and had been a professor of mathematics in a public institution. It is therefore needless to say he was a man of superior intellect.

On the day preceding his release, after so long an incarceration, I begged he would give me his candid opinion of our discipline. I besought him to express his *real* sentiments, quite regardless of any other consideration whatever. His answer, given with willing alacrity, was as follows: — "I cannot speak otherwise than favourably; for I do not believe it possible for any human being to go through the discipline and teaching of this prison without being bettered by them;" and he emphatically added, "If there is any good in a man, it must be brought out!"

As I am convinced W. Y —— spoke his honest sentiments, what an incentive to perseverance does not such testimony create?

CHAP. XXII.

SUPREME DEPRAVITY. — STRANGE INDIVIDUAL CONTRAST. — ABSORBING INFLUENCE OF DRINK. — ROMANTIC CRIMINALS. — SPECIMENS OF SURPASSING RUFFIANISM. — INGENIOUS PLAN OF ROBBERY. — A WEALTHY SHOP-LIFTER. — REMARKABLE FRAUD, AND AFTER-SUICIDE. — UNBLUSHING EFFRONTERY.

How various have been the person, ages, characters, and dispositions which a long experience in a vast prison like this has disclosed; and how instructive it is to contemplate the wiles of the criminal herd, and to trace the abortive speculations of deceptive minds to their failure and consequences! In the recital of prison facts, there can be no necessity to disguise names, where they are merely assumed, or distinguish parties of abandoned character. Where, however, the connections are respectable, or the delinquents novices in crime, it is charitably judicious to employ initials only.

My first introduction to this prison brought me acquainted with many singular specimens of female delinquents, who, herding together, soon taught others to be as depraved and corrupt as themselves. Elizabeth Harris, under a sentence for a mis-

demeanour of one year's imprisonment, was a woman of fine form, and of unusual beauty. Her address and communications to her superiors indicated no lack of education. There was a courtesy and apparent frankness in her demeanour and remarks which disarmed suspicion, and inclined the hearer to place reliance in her honesty of purpose. Notwithstanding, however, this bland exterior, there lurked a sub-current of duplicity and reckless depravity that rendered her a most dangerous woman. When fully known, she was found to be utterly devoid of conscientiousness, modesty, or common decency. In short, she was, without qualification, an abandoned wretch, who delighted in the corruption and ruin of any innocent girl, whose miserable lot it was to be cast into such a den of iniquity. The atrocious treatment by that woman, and others at her instance, of one poor young creature, would tax the utmost credulity to induce belief.

In the same "yard" was one Mary Moriarty, a young athletic Irishwoman, who was the terror of the watchmen and street-keepers in the neighbourhood of St. Giles'. Drunkenness, and consequent violence, frequently consigned her to the prison, where it was some time before I became cognisant of her opposite qualities. If reproved for a trifling fault, she would abandon herself to a

paroxysm of rage that knew no bounds. She cared not whom she assailed, or what she demolished, and it behoved every one who valued either his features or his garments quickly to stand aloof. Restraint and punishment were her too-frequent lot; but she was never consigned to durance before she had fought desperately, and single-handed, against a host of male turnkeys.

A sudden discovery imparted to me the secret of her management. So excessive had been her fury and resistance, that horror deprived most bystanders of any desire to conciliate such a tigress by gentle language. One day, however, when she was fast bound, and could do me no injury, I approached her, and addressed her in kind and feeling terms of remonstrance. A sigh and a tear soon evinced the efficacy of the appeal, and, from that time forth, my expostulatory voice would soothe her rising anger, and make her as tractable as a lamb.

Never did a human creature possess a warmer heart; but the unrestrained indulgence of weak and doating parents had made this excitable girl a species of untamed vixen, and her wild and lawless life contributed to fill up the cup of wretchedness which her temper and habits had made her portion. She died prematurely exhausted by the lowest debauchery.

Amongst the same heterogeneous group was a widow about thirty-five years of age, who had assumed the name of Eliza Ellams. She was of respectable parentage and decent education, but had discarded all respectability by her habits of intemperance. At times she would moralise on her fate, and express a desire to reform. In one of these penitent moods she prevailed upon the chaplain to interpose with her father, and by that means we became aware of his real circumstances, and the debasing influence of drink, so strongly exemplified in her case. The father of Eliza Ellams proved to be a retired joint owner and master of a trading-vessel, in which he had realised an ample competency. He occupied a nicely furnished house near the Commercial Road, where he was educating his granddaughter (this wretched woman's child), who was then about seventeen years of age, and was daily receiving the instruction of music and French masters. The chaplain described her to be a pretty and lady-like girl, and her grandfather to be disposed (however hopelessly) to do all that might be practicable to reclaim his daughter. Such was the home forsaken, and the tender ties rent asunder, by the horrible passion for drink which induced Eliza Ellams to herd with the commonest outcasts of St. Giles', and pursue a life of degrading licentiousness. She was at length picked

up in the kennel, in a state of drunken insensibility, and in that state died.

Deep attachment and romantic terms of endearment would scarcely be looked for amongst this singular clique; yet such either was the sentiment merely professed, or actually existent, between Eliza Ellams and a young female criminal named Julia King.

Julia was about twenty-two years of age, and was not ill-favoured. Her husband had been hanged for burglary, and she was imprisoned, for the term of one year, for uttering base-coin.

Women of the stamp of Eliza Ellams were accustomed to make the round of all the metropolitan prisons; and upon one occasion, while Julia King was still incarcerated here, her friend Ellams was at the New Prison, Clerkenwell, now demolished. These enthusiastic friends carried on a constant correspondence, and the terms "My very dearest little Julia" and "My dearest friend" invariably commenced a series of letters abounding in protestations of attachment, and containing a vast amount of the sentimentality so profusely employed in novels. Ellams, on such occasions, never forgot her "respectful duty to the Governor."

Mary Harvey (originally a domestic servant) died in the infirmary of this prison, acknowledging to

have been committed to various of the London prisons 108 times; while one Charlotte Webb, much the junior of Harvey, estimated her commitments to approach 300. Certainly, during the years that I knew Charlotte Webb she never appeared to me to enjoy more than one day's freedom at a time, so inveterate was her habit of intoxication.

I had not been very long in office ere the parties apprehended for the Moulsey burglary, which had created a great sensation, were *remanded* to this prison. Such a course was, at that time, a frequent practice. Their names were William Banks, James Smith, and John Johnson. The treatment of the respectable inmates of the house thus sacked, was quite in accordance with the marked ferocity of the thieves of that period; and the chief perpetrator of that fell cruelty was James Smith, a man about thirty years of age, whose face and savage deportment exhibited traits of ruffianism rarely surpassed. With the exception of Bishop, who burked the Italian boy, Smith stands recorded in my memory as a miscreant more utterly devoid of human pity than the majority of criminals of his day. His identity not having been sufficiently established, Smith was acquitted, and was frequently an after-visitor here for attempts at burglary. Nothing but the sternest determination could hold such a ruffian in

check; but whenever he offended, I visited him with the utmost severity allowed by law, and at length he became wary and cautious. William Banks, as perfect a specimen of the athlete as could anywhere be seen, with a countenance finely moulded, was fully recognised, and subsequently executed, although he had been the only man of the party who had evinced any touch of humanity towards the despoiled.

On a sharp, frosty night they had been dragged from their beds, hurried down stairs, and, in a state of nudity, locked in a damp cellar. Although Banks went up to fetch some blankets, which he took to the sufferers in the cellar, he was executed, and the arch monster Smith escaped. I shudder at the recollection of that man.

George Mason and John Vanderville, swell thieves, who were reputed veritable "*buzmen*" (fellows esteemed superior adepts), frequently hung together to perpetrate street robberies. Mason was a man of mild, and somewhat genteel exterior, who practised a singular mode of depredation. He would watch some well-dressed old gentleman of burly carriage, whose outward display of gold or jewellery excited the cupidity of the lynx-eyed thief, and the robbery used to be effected in true harlequin style. Mason would approach his previously well-scanned victim, and suddenly, as if by accident, tread heavily

upon his foot, causing thereby intense pain, and numerous contortions. While the poor old gentleman was thus writhing with agony, Mason, apparently grieved and shocked at his own awkwardness, would overwhelm him with apologies, profess to support him, and in the plenitude of his condolence throw his arms around and about him, and steal his gold watch, or pick his pocket of its contents. He was not, however, sufficiently expert to elude occasional detection, and, at length, to avoid impending danger, he decamped to America, where report affirmed he had thriven on his villanous pursuit.

John Bishop, Sarah Bishop his wife, Thomas Williams, and Rhoda Head, the last named in reality the daughter of Bishop and the reputed wife of Williams, were all sent on remand to this prison. The two men were charged (with one May, sent to the New Prison) as the actual murderers of the Italian boy, and the two women as accessories after the fact. Bishop was a stout, thick-set, repulsive looking fellow, who constitutes my supreme and unsurpassed reminiscence of the arch ruffian. Sent here on remand, and ordered to be "kept apart" (an occasional custom in those days), he entered the prison uttering frightful oaths and execrations, indulged in the grossest language, and assailed each subordinate, and even myself, with language of menace and defiance. He

had received no earthly provocation, but gave vent to the irrepressible brutality of his nature.

Fourteen days of exclusive, self-communing incarceration, produced in this fearful criminal a change so marked and depressing, as to constitute an instructive commentary upon the wear and tear which unmitigated reflections will produce upon the sternest resolutions of a guilty mind. Bishop was, by law, entitled to supply himself with abundant food, and to be furnished with a reasonable quantity of porter; he was permitted to take exercise in the open air, and to have the plentiful use of books: so that feebleness could not have been induced by diminished sustenance, nor be accounted for, otherwise than by the terror resulting from guilty ruminations. Certain it is, that iron-souled miscreant became so meek and subdued, so prone to tears, so agitated and tremulous, that, at the end of fourteen days, when he was again sent up to the police-office, he could hardly be recognised as the same coarse and blustering bully who had so recently entered the prison. I never saw the effects of solitary confinement, upon a conscience stricken by crime, more fearfully exemplified. When committed to Newgate for trial, and again associated with lawless spirits, I found, on inquiry, that he had relapsed into a state of brutality so imbedded in his nature.

Williams was a puny, pale, trembling wretch, who must have been urged on to such an extremity of guilt, by the counsel and example of his associate. The two women were, doubtless, quite ignorant of all but the calling as "body snatchers" of their male connections; indeed, in a letter found in Williams's possession from Rhoda Head, she implored him to beware of, and to resist, men of that shocking pursuit, and warned him that they were "a wicked set." These two women were retained here in custody until after the conviction of their husbands; and on the night of that memorable trial, which did not terminate till a late hour, they had retired to bed in the infirmary, then without patients. I was advised that it was customary, on such awful occasions, to inform parties thus circumstanced of so important a result, and with that view I reached home from the Old Bailey, and hastened to make the necessary communication. Notwithstanding that her father and husband had been all day long on trial, and their lives were known to be more than in jeopardy, Rhoda Head was sleeping soundly, and was awaked to receive the fatal intelligence of which I was the bearer. I disclosed my mission as delicately as might be, and for a minute or two she and her mother shed copious tears; but no sooner was I gone, than Rhoda Head relapsed into sleep, and slept without intermission

throughout the night. So much for sensibility. I cannot say that the savage bearing of Bishop quite resulted from his repulsive craft; for the two Sherrins, brothers, and Sutton, well-known despoilers of churchyards, were men rather of kindly bearing.

One of the most extraordinary persons committed to my care, was an old Irish lady, who, for that especial occasion, assumed the name of Sarah Collins. She had been convicted of stealing lace, and I have no doubt she had long been a wealthy shop-lifter. I estimated, from all the information I could glean, her property at exceeding 20,000*l.* After she had been arrested, searched, and thus detected in the larceny, and was committed for trial, she successfully negociated for the absence of the prosecutor, according to her own averment, for the consideration of 500*l.* Moreover, a casual friend hastened over from Ireland to afford his active personal services, and to him also she handed over 500*l.*, to be in due course accounted for; a condition which she soon found was of hopeless consummation. The prosecutor silenced, and all apparently made smooth for an acquittal, her release would have ensued, but for the stern sense of justice of Lord Denman, then Common Serjeant. That learned judge penetrated the scheme of evasion, and resolved to defeat it. Consequently, his examination of the police-constable who produced the lace, and

his lordship's remarks to the jury on the indisputable merits of the case, ensured her conviction; and she received a sentence of one year's imprisonment, and was consigned to this House of Correction.

On the examination of her wardrobe she was found to possess no under-linen. A large wash-leather garment served her for a chemise, and amply encased her frame. That curious and unwonted article of female attire was furnished with several capacious pockets of the like material, which doubtless facilitated the secretion of articles abstracted from shop-counters. There was also in her possession a memorandum book, containing a multitude of strange hieroglyphics, together with a mass of legible addresses, all of which proved to be shops well suited to her devices. She was, unquestionably, a strange specimen of the rich and grasping miser.

Mrs. Collins had not been long under my charge, ere she besought me most urgently to allow her to send for, and receive here, a box from her lodgings, which she averred to contain "papers" of the utmost moment to her interests. After many importunities and great *empressement* on the subject, she wrung from me a consent; and to this place consequently the box was consigned, while the landlord, who brought it, and his own bill at the same time, had a hard battle to fight ere he could procure a settle-

ment of the latter. Meanwhile, I considerately allowed the examination of the "papers," which proved to be of a very singular character.

The female officer who watched the search beheld a somewhat weighty parcel hastily withdrawn, and thrust under the garments (at that period, the prison dress) of Mrs. Collins. All further search was forthwith relinquished; and with breathless haste the aged prisoner rushed up to the infirmary, where cold and rheumatism had caused her to be placed, while the officer hurried to reveal her suspicions to the matron. The matron with great promptitude sent for me, when lo! those precious "papers" proved, on closer inspection, to be a sum of money, consisting of notes, a great quantity of gold, and much silver, amounting to upwards of 2640*l.* The scene that ensued was perfectly dramatic. The horror of the miser at the fear of losing her treasure,—the passionate appeals to me to preserve it for her,—the stealthy approach towards me, and the stifled whisper, "Take what you like for yourself, but spare me some of it! Don't let it go to the government!" all evidenced intense excitement. She had heard that a conviction of felony involved forfeiture of personal property, and she was in an agony of agitation. I paid, as in duty required, to Sir Chapman Marshall, who was then

Sheriff, the whole amount of the capture, and thus for a while the matter subsided.

The newspapers had circulated, perhaps exaggerated, reports of Mrs. Collins's wealth; and some weeks after the above transaction a letter came addressed to her, impressed with a seal in which the "blood-red hand" was unmistakeable. The writer, doubtless, did not know that all letters to prisoners were inspected by the authorities. I of course opened this, and found it to be an offer of marriage from a *Baronet*, who reasoned coolly that a change of name alone could avert the permanent dishonour of this untoward incident! He offered his own hand; and I was particularly struck with the declaration, that he "should be happy to introduce her to his daughters, who would vie with him in making her home happy."

I full well remember the name of that titled proposer; but I have never revealed it. First, I conceived that it had come to my knowledge sanctified by official confidence; and, secondly, I learned from certain inquiries that a speculation, not deserving to be styled rash, had immersed that gentleman in pecuniary difficulties.

With the letter in my hand I sought out Mrs. Collins, and, presenting it to her, said jocosely, "There, Mrs. Collins, is an offer of marriage for you." "For

me, sir?" she inquired, with her usual strong Irish accent, and, seizing the letter, read a few lines, and, ejaculating some words expressive of contempt, cast it with pettishness into the fire. The contemptuous manner in which the thing was decided, created for the poor old woman in my mind some slight respect.

At length her imprisonment lapsed, and she must needs, and, as the world might suppose, gladly, quit her present abode. Not so, however. The day was wet and cold, certainly; but it would be imagined that a rich gentlewoman must be delighted to quit an abode characterised by restraint, gentle though it might be, and by the absence of all luxuries; and that she would be zealous to secure for herself some approach to conventional comfort. But who can probe the aspirations of a miser? Mrs. Collins had no desire to stir. As the morning was bad, she begged permission to stay till the afternoon, which was readily accorded; and when that arrived, marked by increasing wet and cold, she sent to inquire if she might stay till the morrow. I at once refused. I knew, from previous indications, that a miserably penurious spirit influenced her selection; and I sent word that she possessed ample means to engage a lodging or put up at an hotel, and that go from this prison she must. Go, therefore, she did.

A short time afterwards she called upon me, well

attired, and in earnest accents professed to thank me for implied kindnesses. I did not, however, rely greatly upon her protestations, since I had learned that she had been making assiduous inquiries how she might proceed against me legally for the restitution of the 2640*l.* As there could be no doubt of the law in that instance, I was perfectly indifferent to any advice she might think fit to act upon.

The quiet tenour of our way was greatly disturbed by an incident of no ordinary character. A hackney-coach one afternoon arrived from Bow Street, conveying, under the charge of Gardiner, the officer, a gentleman of very fashionable appearance, who proved to be a Captain H. He was a man who had long moved in good society, and whose brother I had full well remembered as a lieutenant in one of the regiments, with the army of occupation in France. That unhappy man, the prisoner in question, had long maintained a superior appearance by practices as rare as they were nefarious. He had, by an adept contrivance, learned to neatly cut out the "ten" or "five" from a Bank of England note, and so cleverly to insert forty or fifty that the fraud was undiscernible by ordinary traders, and scarcely so even by official scrutineers, until aided by a reference to dates and numbers. The Bank of England, long aware that a fraud of this

kind was of daily perpetration, had been earnestly seeking in vain to detect the offender.

At length the guilt of Captain H. became public by the following curious train of circumstances. Two years previously he had bought a horse, saddle, and bridle at Beardsworth's repository, at Birmingham, had paid for them with one of these spurious notes, and had received back a certain amount of change. The note, paid by Beardsworth in the course of trade, was in due time refastened upon him, with all the loss of the transaction; and the rage of a man thus defrauded may be supposed so to have taxed his memory, as to bring back, in bold relief, the features of the cheat. Beardsworth recalled him to mind, and was on the look-out for him; and H. had, as indelibly, conceived the stamp of the face of his victim. On the afternoon of his apprehension, H., who was casually walking in the Lowther Arcade, was about to emerge from the north entrance, as Beardsworth was on the point to enter by it; they both saw each other, and an instant recognition mutually occurred. H. ran with utmost speed, closely pursued by Beardsworth. They made the circuit of Trafalgar Square; and H., sorely pressed, sought once more the fatal north entrance to the Arcade, and was there captured, on the very spot that marked their first rencontre a few minutes pre-

viously. The case was heard at Bow Street. H. was remanded to Cold Bath-fields Prison, from whence he never again went out alive; for there he committed a most determined and deliberate suicide. On the evening preceding his death I had sent for him to my office, to inquire, simply as a matter of duty, if he had any thing to say to me. He seemed to be labouring under deep anguish of mind, and with evident emotion asked, if I would allow his fire to be well made up, that, by its light, he might be enabled to write an important letter. Such permission was readily accorded, and he was locked in one of the remand-rooms for the night.

As I was about to be engaged at the Sessions all the following day, I arose early, and accompanied the chief-warder in his morning inspection and muster. On coming to the remand-room the door was unlocked and opened, and, being the first to step in, I started back at the sight of H. suspended from a nail in the wall. He was quite cold, and had been dead for some hours, and a very long letter, written to his wife by the glare of the fire he had solicited, lay on the table. So determined had the wretched man been to allow no casualty to frustrate his design, that after making fast his pocket-handkerchief, first to his neck and next to the nail, while standing on a chair, he next bound his wrists with

each end of his neck-handkerchief, and, passing a leg over it, kicked away the chair, and thus bereft his hands of the power to act during his death-struggles. He perished ignominiously, urged to his shameful fate by a weak desire to maintain an undue appearance, and to enjoy a false position, by the instrumentality of a perilous fraud.

The letter to his wife disclosed the imperturbable coolness and patient calmness of his intellect. He entered into the most minute details for her guidance; directed her as to the disposal and application of all available means; spoke of his wretched children with equanimity, and counselled their mother as to their education and destination; and, in short, displayed so clear and discriminating a judgment, even in that dread hour, that the jury unanimously returned a verdict of *felo de se;* and Captain H. was interred in the centre of cross-roads in this parish, not far removed from the scene of his dishonoured exit from the world.

Gardiner, the officer, who had charge of the case, possessed himself of H.'s effects, and sought with nice acumen to discover the means H. had resorted to for effecting so subtle a fraud. He was almost baffled in the attempt to unveil the mystery, until he pressed his thumb closely along the inner margin of a portmanteau, when a spring gave way, and he discovered

and showed me a small collection of fine camel-hair pencils, Indian ink, gum, and numerous black letter "forties" and "fifties" nicely imitative of the Bank originals. Thus miserably perished Captain H., a man of fashionable exterior, good education, and of most respectable connections.

The low thieves of London are usually an ignorant idle, dirty set of skulkers, with a carriage in the streets that at once betrays their calling to the eye of those acquainted with the class. Their hang-dog looks are unmistakeable; and thus a combination of external unseemliness, and the absence of real dexterity, tend to mark them as objects for arrest, or the slaves of unprofitable toil. Not so the highest order of depredators. Of this class there are but few who go openly abroad to exercise manual tact and ingenuity. Still there are some who are men of superior bearing, good address, ready wit, and unblushing impudence.

Some years ago I repaired one morning, as was my daily custom, to the "reception ward," which contained those committed on the preceding day and evening. Amongst the usual herd of dirty wretches there stood a tall young man of the most fashionable exterior, whose dress denoted unquestionable style, and whose whole appearance was most *distingué*. Amazed to see a person of such an unusual stamp, I

inquired, "What has brought you to prison, Sir?" He shrugged his shoulders, and said, with apparent concern, "A strange mistake: I am accused of having picked the pocket of an officer of the Guards at a bazaar. Whereas my name is Hawkesbury; I am the son of a Major in the army, and am connected with some of the first families in England." I recommended an application to the Secretary of State, and affirmed that a mistake of such a nature clearly established could be easily rectified.

Thus I left him, and he, with others, was duly clothed in the prison costume and consigned to the yard allotted to "rogues and vagabonds," for as such he was convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for six weeks.

In the forenoon I was in my office, and was suddenly apprised that a gentleman desired to speak to me, when in walked a man apparently exceeding forty years of age, who was fashionably attired, and possessed the exterior of a gentleman. He seemed to be deeply affected, held his handkerchief to his eyes, and appeared to sob convulsively. I was moved by the man's well-feigned grief, and implored him to be comforted, but it was some minutes before he was restored to composure; and then he proceeded to inform me he was Major Hawkesbury, and was

the father of the unfortunate young gentleman of whom I have already spoken.

He could not, he said, comprehend how so fatal a mistake could have arisen, talked of his connection with a baronet, and the high respectability of all the family, and, in short, completely imposed upon me by his specious address and manners.

"To refer to the Secretary of State was," he said, "impossible." The affair must not transpire; the family name could not be coupled with such a transaction, and there was no alternative but for young Hawkesbury to stay out the six weeks; and my clemency was invoked in his behalf. He did stay out the term, observed the utmost propriety of conduct, and at length left me with the firm belief that he really was the victim of an error, and could boast of genteel lineage.

Two years had elapsed. I had almost forgotten Hawkesbury, but went as usual in the morning to the reception ward, and there again stood the identical man, arrayed in the same fashionable attire, and wearing the same modest expression of countenance. I was of course amazed, inquired into the present charge, and learned that it was for picking a pocket at the Italian Opera. Again was he convicted as a rogue and vagabond,—but this time the sentence was the maximum term of three calendar months.

I told him there could be no mistake now, and that I would take care to suffer no deception to be again practised upon me. He still talked of his family and high connections; but I silenced him, and left him to the discipline of the tread-wheel.

About noon I was in my office, and in conversation with Mr. Moreton Dyer, then a magistrate, when we were startled by a knock at the outer gate; "so long and loud it might have raised the dead." I never heard such a knock either before or since. The gate opened, in stalked (apparently) a gentleman, and in the *loudest tone* inquired if the Governor was within. Answered in the affirmative, and shown into my office, he rushed up to me, seized me by the hand, which he shook most heartily, and exclaimed, "Captain Chesterton, how *do* you do? I am delighted to see you!" "You have the advantage of me," said I; "I really don't know you."—"Why," said my visitor, with an assumed nonchalance, "it is two years since we met; but upon that occasion you were very kind and considerate, and I am come—" Beginning to surmise, I interrupted him —"Surely, Sir, you are not come about that man Hawkesworth?" (Such was the present name, and not Hawkesbury.) "The very same."—"Then, Sir," I replied, "I beg you will not take the liberty to shake me by the hand." "Not shake you by the hand,

Sir?" said the fellow with an affected frown, "why not? I often shake Sir Robert Peel by the hand. My name is *Howard.* I am a Royal Academician; I live at Cloudesley Terrace, Hammersmith, and often dine at Sir Robert's table."—"Why, Sir," said I, "you forget yourself; the last time I saw you, you were a Major in the army!" "Oh dear no, Sir; you are quite mistaken. I said the young man's *father* was a Major in the army."

It was in vain for me to reiterate the real facts: he denied all with unblushing effrontery, and, after inviting Mr. Dyer, whose name he heard me pronounce, to "Cloudesley Terrace, Hammersmith," he made me a stiff bow, and walked away.

I instantly despatched an officer, well acquainted with Hammersmith, to make a searching inquiry, and his report was, there was no such place as Cloudesley Terrace, nor did Mr. Howard, R. A., live in Hammersmith, or in its vicinity.

The same two fellows were subsequently taken up for picking pockets at the Yacht Ball, at Cowes, and were committed for trial. They promptly sued out a writ of Habeas Corpus, and by misrepresentation induced the judge in chambers to admit them to bail. The bail required was heavy, but that they forfeited, and set sail for America, in order to escape the doom of transportation, which they full well knew awaited them in England.

CHAP. XXIII.

AN UNMERITED SENTENCE. — ITS RESULTS. — CASE OF APPALLING DEGENERACY. — TITLED DELINQUENTS. — IRRADICABLE TAINT OF CRIME.

THE following history is that of a really beautiful young woman, and its contemplation awakens a combination of pain and pleasure. It is, indeed, sad to reflect that a misapprehension of suspicious circumstances, without the means at hand of correct elucidation, should have wrongfully consigned a young creature, not more than twenty-two years of age, to the lingering application of penal discipline for a whole year. Yet there is a melancholy satisfaction in reflecting that much good resulted to that unhappy girl, from the genuine charity which impels an active Christian spirit to dive into the abodes of wretchedness, and to seek the redemption even of the imprisoned outcast.

When I affirm that C. M. was really beautiful, I deal not in exaggeration; for the judge who tried her, the late Common Serjeant, quite scandalised her prosecutrix, and some lady friends who accompanied

her to the court, by the apology he addressed to the jury for not transporting the trembling girl at the bar, saying, "Gentleman, we *cannot* afford to send such beauty from this country." Her sentence, consequently, became imprisonment with hard labour for one year.

C. M. was in the service of Mrs. N. as lady's maid to her daughter, who was at that time receiving the addresses of Captain J. of the R. N. Miss N. testified her regard for her lover by working, decorating, or marking cambric handkerchiefs, and other such light presents, which she was injudiciously in the habit of transmitting, with occasional *billets doux*, by the hands of her pretty maid, who, on such occasions, carried them to the captain's lodgings. In time the captain appears to have overstepped the bounds of prudence and propriety, and most reprehensibly to have cultivated such terms with his charming messenger as to lead him to present, and her to accept, a few of the small presents which Miss N. had designed for him alone. C. M. always emphatically insisted upon the perfect innocency of her little flirtation with Captain J., but there is quite sufficient in its outward aspect to justify reproof. However, pending his engagement with Miss N., Captain J. accepted the command of a frigate, and sailed to the coast of North America.

He had not been long away, when on some luckless occasion Miss N., in the absence of her maid, went to the room of the latter in search of something hastily wanted; and, not finding what she sought, raised the lid of a box belonging to C. M., and to her horror and dismay beheld, in the possession of her maid, several of the pretty presents worked by her own fair fingers for Captain J. Running to her mother with indignant haste, she imparted the fact to her, and succeeded in arousing the fierce anger of that matron; and it was forthwith determined to call in a policeman, to seize C. M. on her return home, and to subject her to prosecution. All this was accordingly done, and at length the wretched girl, who could only plead in her extremity the free gift of Captain J., without a scintilla of proof to justify her assertion, was, as I have shown, convicted, sentenced, and immured without a voice being raised in her behalf.

There was a modest gentleness in her deportment, which disposed every one in her favour; and although she spoke to me in fervid terms of her innocence, yet that plea is so incessantly set forth in prisons, that it is listened to with almost universal incredulity. We treated C. M. with suavity and kindness, and she repaid us by the most exemplary conduct, and by unwearied industry. By some means the fate of

the poor girl had reached the ears of Captain J., absent and on duty in America, and he wrote a letter to Sir F. O., an aged baronet, imploring of him to see her redressed, and fully confirmed the truth of her averment. In that letter, which was brought to me by the baronet, Captain J. cursed his indiscretion, and affirmed that he could not rest, day or night, from thinking of that injured girl. The baronet, however, was one of those easy-going old gentlemen who could not appreciate the Captain's anguish, and who expressed himself very drily, and as he imagined sagely, on the casual relation between a gentleman and a pretty girl; and although he saw C. M. and coldly asked her a few questions, he departed murmuring aphorisms, which resolved themselves into very common-place philosophy.

The declaration of the girl herself, supported now by the testimony of Captain J., necessarily produced a strong impression upon my mind, and I began to regard her case with much sympathy. Still nothing could be attempted in her behalf; for in cases of conviction founded upon evidence given upon oath, mere epistolary explanations avail little. Thus months rolled on, and the poor girl's fulfilment of her sentence seemed inevitable. Again, however, did Captain J. strive to enlist a friend in her behalf; and Captain K. brought me a letter to peruse, couched

in terms more strongly descriptive of the agony with which J. reflected upon the girl's unmerited fate. A consultation, however, between Captain K. and myself resulted in the conviction that we were powerless to serve her.

In process of time the term of sentence lapsed, and C. M. was discharged, with such assistance as lay within the compass of the means at our disposal; but still the aid extended to her was necessarily limited. Not many days after her discharge, I was informed that a lady desired to see me; and a person entered the office so deeply veiled that it was impossible to recognise her features. The stranger, however, upraised her veil, and there stood C. M., genteelly attired, her hair disposed in ringlets, and her fine features seen to an advantage which the prison costume had naturally marred.

With tears she besought my advice and assistance, described her lack of friends, relatives, or pecuniary means, and avowed her anxiety to be saved from the ruin that seemed to stare her in the face. Seeing she was in earnest, I recommended her to fly for counsel and assistance to a Samaritan lady, whom she had known as a prison visitor. I furnished her with the address, to which she instantly repaired; and finding there a willing ear and Christian sympathy, C. M. entered a superior asylum under the

auspices of that kind patroness, from whence she was soon drafted into a family made cognisant of her severe trials. The last accounts of her were highly favourable to her well doing; she was in favour with her employers, and had earned the character with them of an exemplary young woman. Whether Captain J. was ever enabled to indemnify her for the sufferings his thoughtless levity had entailed upon her, I could never learn, though I casually heard that the incidents of this catastrophe broke off his engagement with Miss N.

The history which I now propose to relate, is one of a most remarkable character. Within the last three or four years, there was imprisoned in this House of Correction, a woman (E. L.) about twenty-six years of age, of short and slender form, possessing small, bright, and intelligent features, and capable at will of assuming a perfectly ladylike deportment. Frequently brought under my notice by persevering misconduct, she one day in reply to my remonstrance asked me with a look of earnest inquiry, how I expected *she* could ever emerge from the degradation in which she had been steeped. She averred the thing to be *impossible.* Struck by the energy of her rebuke, I inquired into her history, and received from her own lips the ensuing strange relation. First, I discovered that she was a woman of very

good education, and she professed to have been reared and educated a gentlewoman.

According to her own account, she had married, at a very early age, a Frenchman of good station and fortune, with whom she had lived happily in Paris for nine years, until in an evil hour she saw and became attached to a young Englishman of ample means, with whom she eloped from her husband. Here let me observe, that she spoke French fluently, and with a pure Parisian accent. She described her seducer with great enthusiasm, and emphatically declared that the happiness she had enjoyed with him, during ten months, would, in her own terms, "compensate her for an eternity of misery."

He brought her to England, and introduced her to a friend of his, who also kept a mistress, and the four resided together in elegant lodgings in the same house, in Bury Street, St. James's. She possessed, she said, abundant means in money, had a profusion of jewellery, and the most ample fashionable wardrobe. In short, she revelled in luxury. At length, however, the peace of herself and her female companion was disturbed by the frequent nightly absence of their lords, and by some means they ascertained that those gentlemen had become the frequenters of a house of equivocal reputation. The two women sought out, and bribed the mistress of

this house to admit them that they might unexpectedly confront their faithless swains; and that project they accordingly carried into execution. E. L.'s protector became so exasperated at this interference with his free action, that he quitted her instantly, and she saw him no more. She waited for days in anxious expectation of his return; and no sooner did she become convinced that she was certainly abandoned, than rage and despair took possession of her mind, and she proceeded to act with prompt desperation.

She threw off all but the most indispensable clothing, she cast aside and spurned the jewels she had worn, she threw her money on the floor, and, with a bare sufficiency for the most pressing want, she rushed wildly into the street, and seeking a public house drank off such a quantity of brandy at a draught, as to become completely insensible. How long she remained in that state, she knew not; but when she awoke to consciousness she found herself the inmate of a hospital (the Middlesex, I believe), reduced to the weakest condition.

As she became convalescent, she contracted by some means an acquaintance with a German, whose calling was that of a shoemaker. He also had been an inmate of the hospital, and extended to her, then weak and dejected, considerable sympathy and kind-

ness. Gratitude attached her to that man, and at length they conjointly occupied a single room, the lodging in which he pursued his humble craft. He was, she said, addicted to drink, and smoked incessantly, and she soon learned to acquire these (for a woman) revolting practices, and accompanied him nightly to the tap-room of a public house, where she joined in the prevailing drunkenness, and listened, without shame, to the vilest ribaldry of the frequenters of that low resort. Often, she affirmed, had she seen individuals take off their very small-clothes, send them to be pawned, or sold, and sit without them to consume the proceeds in more drink.

All this time she felt a sort of savage pleasure in thus revenging herself for the sudden blight of her unhallowed, but deep-rooted affections. Poverty became the necessary result of such a course, and then she resorted to theft, which had twice brought her to this prison. When I asked her if an appeal to her husband in Paris would be likely to prove successful, she replied, with an indescribable expression of momentary affliction, that she was sure there was not a fault in her that her husband would not pardon, nor a sacrifice for her sake he would not make. But no: her degradation was, she affirmed, too great for redemption; she was lost body and soul irremediably, and seemed half to glory in her

ruin. This is an example, as rare as fearful, of a mind of singular construction, capable of only one all-absorbing passion, and equal to the abandonment of earthly and heavenly hopes to gratify a sentiment of indefinable desperation. E. L. left this prison; but I have since heard of her as an habitual drunkard, and daily increasing reprobate.

Both on the males' and females' side of the prison have we had, in the course of years, persons of almost every grade in life. On the male side I do not believe one of the various professions could truthfully be omitted; and some details would disclose very singular habits and exceptionable practices. Numerous transitions from high respectability to deplorable degradation have tended to exhibit the pliability of the human mind, capable of enlargement or contraction in a most remarkable degree.

One man, indeed, was imprisoned here first as a felon, and subsequently as a common beggar, who had been a captain in a regiment of the line, and had in fact been known to a magistrate of the county, who had served in the same regiment.

On the females' side we have witnessed the incarceration of the lady of a baronet (Lady B.), and that of a French viscountess (M.). The former was a woman of bad disposition and arrogant bearing, but of most tasteful notion of dress; for even the prison

costume was put on (especially the cap) in so quiet yet effective style, that strangers were led to inquire who the wearer could be, and to applaud her ladylike appearance. This is almost the only virtue I could assign her; for, apart from other human frailties, she was not long after her enlargement convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury, and forfeited her sureties rather than come up to receive judgment.

The latter was a very extraordinary person, who bore the name of Louise Mirabella, and was connected with a gang of French swindlers in London, after Paris had become, in a common figure of speech, "too hot to hold her." Knowing her untrustworthy disposition, I should not have confided in her own statement as to her name and connections; but a correspondence both with herself and, in a very limited degree, with me, by the then editor of "La Presse" journal, who had known her for years, made me cognisant of her true history. She was a woman of very high talent, remarkable for eloquence and tears. I never knew a woman more truly eloquent, nor one who, in the simple recital of her own case, shed so many or such pearly tears.

She asked my permission to write for her friend, the editor, a description of this establishment with its discipline and details; and her paper on the subject would have done credit to any periodical. Still she

was a treacherous, bad woman, about twenty-three years of age, with a bright, but by no means handsome countenance, and a disposition replete with chicane and intrigue. The fraud which brought her here for one year displayed great *finesse* and arch dissimulation. Indeed, her correspondent, the editor, far from writing her *billets doux*, reproached her bitterly for former turpitude, and expressed a mistrust of any hopeful future improvement. The Viscount M. had, it appeared, married her for the little money she possessed, which, having obtained, he left her to her fate, and it was her misfortune to contract friendships which were ruinous to her principles.

After quitting this prison, she was again detected in a similar fraud, and was sentenced to transportation. I went to the New Prison, at Clerkenwell, after her second conviction, in 1841 or 1842; and in the presence of the matron of that prison, she fully maintained the character I have given her for copious weeping.

As a concluding proof of the demoralising stain inflicted by crime, and the perverted inclinations which it engenders, I will cite the case of a woman of genteel and interesting appearance, who, some ten years ago, figured before a criminal court as the Hon. Mrs. Talbot. She had attracted the cha-

ritable notice of a humane magistrate, who, having learned her father's address, wrote to him in her behalf. He proved to be a man who had realised a fortune out of one of the splendid inns of England, and was living as a gentleman at a handsome country residence, which he had purchased. She was an only daughter, and her fall had sensibly affected him. He wrote consequently, in terms suitable to the pang which she had inflicted, and willingly agreed to receive her home again, on her promise of future amendment. I was the medium of communication between the kind magistrate and Talbot (in which name she was imprisoned), and for months she professed thankfulness at the happier prospects in view. As the time of her enlargement, however, approached, she hesitated and demurred, until it became manifest that she clung with fondness to a debasing, though exciting, life, and preferred a precarious course of immorality and fraud, to the peacefulness of an elegant home and paternal tenderness. How aptly does Scripture inquire, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard its spots?" We heard of that wretched woman thereafter as the companion of a male swindler, with whom she was living in very inferior lodgings.

CHAP. XXIV.

AN ABANDONED MISCREANT. — INCEST AND MURDER. — MATILDA HEWSON. — SAVAGE OUTRAGE. — SYMPATHY OF PRISONERS. — RESULTS OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS.

As a conclusion to personal adventures, I could not consistently suppress the fact, that, within the last five years, I have twice narrowly escaped death at the hands of prisoners.

One wretched being, named George John Hewson, whose career of crime could scarcely be exceeded, habitually contemplated the murder of whomsoever might offend him; and as I was compelled by his turbulent disposition frequently to reprove and coerce him, he contrived, in June 1848, to purloin and secrete a sharp-pointed knife, with a view to kill me.

I was providentially saved from his design; but an unoffending warder, named Woodhouse, was stabbed to the heart by the prisoner in a fit of rage. Upon that occasion many prisoners, seated at breakfast, jumped up and rushed to the assistance of the warder. Alas! their well-meant zeal was useless; the blow had been too instantaneous and sure. The miserable culprit paid the forfeit of his life on the

gallows, and scrupled not to aver, two days before his execution, that I had been his intended victim.

The career of that abandoned man discloses an extent of turpitude rarely equalled, and never surpassed. It is fearful to contemplate so vile a being; and to have merited the hatred of such a monster almost constitutes an honour.

I derived my information respecting him from an officer of this prison, who had served with him in the same regiment; and from his unhappy daughter, in the presence of the matron, I learned that portion of his atrocity which had made her its victim.

Hewson had been a private soldier in the 2nd or Queen's regiment, and accompanied that corps to India. There his bad conduct entailed upon him severe punishments, until at length, under the hope of eluding military restraint, he proclaimed himself to have been the murderer of Mrs. Donatty, an old woman who had resided near Gray's Inn Road, whose death was involved in mystery, and whose destroyer has not to this day been discovered.

The truthless confession of this miserable trickster was transmitted to England, and consigned to the scrutiny of the police authorities, who soon detected the fabrication of the whole narrative; and the regiment was duly apprised of the imposture.

From the moment that Hewson had declared himself to be a murderer he had been strictly confined, and, for greater security, kept in irons; but no sooner was it discovered that he had practised a gross fraud, and by its means had robbed the regiment of a soldier's services, than he was tried by a court martial for that offence, and, under its sentence, received two hundred lashes.

When discharged from the regiment, he resided in England with his wife and daughter. The former, worn out by grief arising from his brutal treatment, died prematurely. His daughter spoke affectionately of her mother, and attributed her own perdition to her mother's loss.

According to the girl's account, her father came home one night half drunk, and wickedly assailed her. She was then only fifteen years of age, and implored his pity and forbearance; but in spite of her cries and entreaties, the monster effected by force the ruin of his own child. She was constrained to silence by his savage threats of vengeance should she disclose the secret; and under the influence of a terror she could not subdue, she was chained to a cohabitation with her own father for seven years; all that time, as she averred, leading a life of poverty, drudgery, and wretchedness, owing equally to his abandoned habits, and to her own reflections.

There is, I fear, no doubt that three children, the fruit of that incestuous intercourse, were destroyed by their unnatural father, and, according to his own acknowledgment, consigned to drains or cesspools. At length, however, the circumstances attending the fate of the last child caused proceedings to be instituted against both father and daughter, who were arraigned upon a charge of wilful murder. The capital charge was not sustained; but the two were convicted of the minor offence of "concealing the birth," and received sentence, he of two years', and she of eighteen months', imprisonment, with hard labour.

Hewson was a man of tall and comely appearance, with occasionally a good address. He was poorly educated, but was naturally acute and intelligent. He was, however, restless, self-willed, and revengeful to the last degree. His daughter affirmed that he had often, when free, gone about armed with a knife, with the avowed intent to inflict bodily harm, even for a casual offence.

He seemed to gloat over the desire to fix a charge of murder upon his daughter. At his pressing instance, police officers twice attended here to receive his statements against her, while he perfectly wearied me by the repetition of those shocking charges.

I once related to Matilda Hewson her father's frequent asseverations of her guilt, and I never witnessed deeper anguish than the wretched girl exhibited. She wrung her hands, sobbed convulsively, denounced his matchless villany, and deplored her fate in such piteous accents that the hardest heart must have been touched by her emotion, and roused into indignation by the tale of horror she disclosed.

She solemnly averred, and her demeanour testified to the truth of her assertion, that nothing but the dread of his fury had retained her in his clutches. The utmost limits of the kingdom would have proved, she said, unequal to save her. "No, no, no!" she exclaimed wildly, "there was no getting away from him. He would never have rested till he had taken my life!" She was apparently a gentle creature, quite unequal to contend with such a miscreant; and I felt so strongly that she was the unwilling victim of a horrible combination of circumstances, which she had not the courage and energy to expose, that I thenceforth felt the utmost commiseration for one so supremely unfortunate.

On the morning of her father's execution I went down to the females' ward at eight o'clock, expressly to see her. She was frightfully agitated, and sobbed aloud. At a quarter past eight (when she knew the

fatal consummation had passed by) her tears were dried, and her appearance betokened perfect composure. From that time forth during her imprisonment, she was cheerful, active, and seemingly happy. An intolerable weight of misery had been removed from her mind, and she became animated by hopeful confidence. On her discharge she was effectually befriended by some Samaritan ladies, who had been urged into exertion by pity for a young creature so wronged and ruined. The last accounts I heard were favourable to her well-doing. She had changed her name, and was enjoined to lock her horrible secret within her own breast.

Again, on the 29th May in the present year, a square piece of stone, weighing 3 lb. 9 oz., was hurled from a cell, with great muscular force, at my head by a convict named Alexander Goods (late a private soldier in the 56th regiment), who was under a sentence of transportation for fourteen years, for a murderous assault on a sergeant. That award was still further augmented by a sentence of two years in this prison, for a like offence upon a warder in Millbank prison, but of still greater aggravation.

A sudden movement on my part providentially brought the stone in primary contact with my arm, which was frightfully contused. Thence the stone, slanting upwards, struck and split my left ear, in-

flicting a gash behind it, which bled copiously. The blow produced momentary stupefaction, and made me stagger against a wall; but had it first assailed my head, as was intended, death would have been inevitable, and most probably instantaneous. Through the carelessness of a warder who had neglected to lock the door of a coal-cellar, opening into a yard in which Goods was at exercise alone, he was enabled to pick up and conceal a missile of that formidable nature.

Just contiguous to the cell from which this cowardly assault proceeded, sat upwards of ninety prisoners at dinner; and in the midst of the pain and indignity under which I was writhing, it afforded me unspeakable gratification to hear the simultaneous groan of horror and indignation which burst from every lip.

Ruffians disposed to go to this fell extremity are the very rare exceptions; but it testifies to the more generous influences of our common nature, that, even amongst criminals in a state of *duresse*, numbers should always be found anxious to rush to the aid of an otherwise unprotected officer.

During my long experience of upwards of twenty-three years, amongst hosts, amounting now to a daily average exceeding 1200 prisoners, I have seen brutal degeneracy in every shape, and in many

instances the most revolting wickedness. Still it is a pleasure to avow that, fairly contemplating the crime, ignorance, and depravity in which so many have been reared from their infancy, and the consequent absence of all that is pure and ennobling in the moral atmosphere they have inhaled, I have discovered so many traits of excellence in countless apparently abandoned objects, that I entertain, perhaps, a superior opinion of human nature to most others.

I am accustomed to remark that "the stamp of the Deity has not been quite effaced by the trail of the serpent;" and many would be surprised to know the patience, the industry, the tractability, the grateful recognition of kindness, the prompt extension of aid in any emergency, and the thousand little traits that tend to relieve the character from utter baseness.

There are too many who possess innumerable faults and vices, and upon whom reasoning and forbearance are alike wasted; but by far the majority exhibit many redeeming virtues, which compel you to pity their fallen condition. While numbers are by habit and association hopeless, as regards thorough reformation, the discipline, cleanliness, and the instruction in well-ordered prisons, tend immensely to humanise even the worst criminals. Left unchecked

in their vicious career, they would become monsters; but being frequently committed, and compelled to observe the decencies of humanity, the tendency to unlimited grossness is checked, and some particle of better principle infused into them.

Indeed, the improvements of the prisons in and around the metropolis, the promotion of education, and the organisation of the new police force have conjointly tended to the advancement of public order, and the repression of crime. The greatest number of commitments to this prison, since its erection, occurred in the year 1832; since which time, the extension of buildings in Middlesex and the adjoining counties, the vast increase of the metropolitan population, and the enlarged powers conferred upon the police courts by the police act, would, *primâ facie*, lead to the expectation of a proportionate increase of convictions. The relative numbers, however, disclose a signal and gratifying proof of a diminution of crime. They stand thus:—

Commitments for the year ending Michaelmas, 1832 -	12,543
Commitments for the year ending Michaelmas, 1852 -	9,227
Reduction - - - - -	3,316

Sift these numbers by any or every test, the result remains, I affirm, unimpeachable.

The attention of the authorities should, however,

be directed, with a view more effectually to promote the moral improvement of the masses, to the dwellings of the poor, and to the purification of the vile neighbourhoods which now abound in the metropolis, and equally so in populous manufacturing towns. In my very last conversation with the late Mrs. Fry (whose memory I devoutly honour), at a moment when health was fast failing her, that gifted woman spoke with much energy of the class to which she had rendered such great services; and she concluded by imploring of me to let no opportunity be lost of impressing that vital subject upon those in power, with whom I might converse. "What avail," she asked emphatically, "our teaching and exertions in prisons, when the inmates are afterwards to be consigned to those dens of iniquity?" I express my own strong convictions on that point, fortified by an opinion which none will gainsay.

THE END.

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